

# MOTHER INDIA

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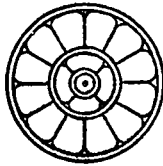
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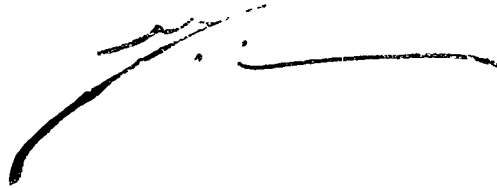
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Lord, Thou hast willed, and I execute.  
A new light breaks upon the earth,  
A new world is born.  
The things that were promised are fulfilled.



# MOTHER INDIA

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Vol. XX

No. 8

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*"Great is Truth and it shall prevail"*

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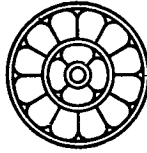
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## WORDS OF THE MOTHER

all sincere effort to  
progress and get rid of  
dangerous habits is answered  
and supported by an active help  
from the Grace -

but the effort must be  
steady and the  
aspiration must be  
sincere.

Blessings

## A MESSAGE FROM THE MOTHER

Rompre avec les vieilles traditions et ne pas obéir aux vieilles règles est bon—à condition de découvrir en soi une conscience plus haute et plus vraie qui manifeste l'harmonie, la paix, la beauté et un ordre supérieur, vaste et progressif.

26-8-1967



To break with old traditions and not to obey old rules is good—provided you discover within yourself a higher and truer consciousness which manifests harmony, peace, beauty and a superior order vast and progressive.

26-8-1967

THE MOTHER

## THE WRONG WAY TO DIVINISATION

### AN UNPUBLISHED LETTER OF SRI AUROBINDO

YOU are persisting in a wrong effort which prevents the very object that you have in view. You want to have what you call "divinisation"; but you cannot have it in the way you are trying.

I will point out your mistakes; please read carefully and try to understand rightly. Especially understand my words in their plain sense and do not put into them any "hidden meaning" or any other meaning which might be favourable to your present ideas.

The Divine Consciousness we are trying to bring down is a Truth-Consciousness. It shows us all the truth of our being and nature on all the planes—mind, life and body. It does not throw them away or make an impatient effort to get rid of them immediately and substitute something fantastic and wonderful in their place. It works upon them patiently and slowly to perfect and raise in them all that is capable of perfection and to change all that is obscure and imperfect.

Your first mistake is to imagine that it is possible to become divine in a moment. You imagine that the higher consciousness has only to descend in you and remain there and all is finished. You imagine that no time is needed, no long, hard or careful work, and that all will be done for you in a moment by the Divine Grace. This is quite wrong. It is not done in that way; and so long as you persist in this error, there can be no permanent divinisation, and you will only disturb the Truth that is trying to come, and disturb your own mind and body by a fruitless struggle.

Secondly, you are mistaken in thinking that because you feel a certain force and presence, therefore you are at once divine. It is not so easy to become divine. There must be to whatever force or presence comes, a right interpretation and response, a right knowledge in the mind, a right preparation of the vital and physical being. But what you are feeling is an abnormal vital force and exaltation due to the impatience of your desire, and with this there come suggestions born of your desire, which you mistake for truth and call inspirations and intuitions.

I will point out some of the mistakes you make in this condition.

You immediately begin to think that there is no further need of my instructions or guidance, because you imagine you are henceforth one with me. Not only so, but the suggestions which you want to accept go quite against my instructions. How can this be if you are one with me? It is obvious that these ideas that go against my instructions come from your mind and impulses and not from me or from any Divine Consciousness or from anything that can be called the Sri Aurobindo Consciousness.

In this connection you write, "I see the difficulty that even when I am filled with you, the idea of obeying and following your instructions still works—even when

you have made me yourself. I pray for the needful." The idea of following and obeying my instructions is not a difficulty, it is the only thing that can help you. That obedience is the thing that is needful.

What do you mean by saying, "You have made me yourself"? The words seem to have no meaning. You cannot mean that you become the same individual self as I; there cannot be two Aurobindos; even if it were possible it would be absurd and useless. You cannot mean that you have become the Supreme Being, for you cannot be God or the Ishwara. If it is in the ordinary (Vedantic) sense, then everyone is myself, since every Jiva is a portion of the One. You may perhaps have become conscious for a time of this unity; but that consciousness is not sufficient by itself to transform you or to make you divine.

You begin to imagine that you can do without food and sleep and disregard the needs of the body; and you forget my instructions and mistakenly call these needs a disturbance or the play of the hostile material and physical forces. This idea is false. What you feel is only a vital force, not the highest truth, and the body remains what it was; it will suffer and break down if it is not given food, rest and sleep.

It is the same mistaken vital exaltation that made you feel your body to see if it was of supramental substance. Understand clearly that the body cannot be transformed in that way into something quite unphysical. The physical being and the body, in order to be perfected, have to go through a long preparation and gradual change. This cannot be done, if you do not come out of this mistaken vital exaltation and come down into the ordinary physical consciousness first, with a clear sense of physical realities.

Finally, if you want the real change and transformation, you must clearly and resolutely recognise that you have made and are still making mistakes and have entered into a condition that is unfavourable to your object. You have tried to get rid of your thinking mind, instead of perfecting and enlightening it, and have tried to replace it by artificial "inspirations and intuitions."

You have developed a dislike and shrinking for the body and the physical being and its movements; and therefore you do not want to come down into the normal physical consciousness and do patiently there what is necessary for the change. You have left yourself only with a vital consciousness which feels sometimes a great force and Ananda and at others falls into bad depressions because it is not supported either by the mind above or by the body below.

You must absolutely change all this, if you want the real transformation.

You must not mind losing the vital exaltation; you must not mind coming into a normal physical consciousness, with a clear practical mind, looking at physical conditions and physical realities. You must accept them first, or you will never be able to change and perfect them.

You must recover a quiet mind and intelligence. If you can once firmly do these things, the Greater Truth and Consciousness can come back in its proper time, in the right way and under the right conditions.



# THE ENMITY THEORY

## AN UNPUBLISHED LETTER OF SRI AUROBINDO

I have not had time yet to write about the enmity theory. I will do so more fully in two or three days. But I may say at once that the idea does not seem to me at all true that by enmity to the Divine one can reach the Divine and that too more quickly than by bhakti. The idea is contrary to the spiritual truth of things, to reason, to nature and to experience.<sup>1</sup>

13-9-1935

<sup>1</sup> Editor's Note · Ref. *On Yoga* II, Tome Two, p. 431.

## TALKS WITH SRI AUROBINDO

*(These talks are from the Note-books of Dr. Nirodbaran who used to record most of the conversations which Sri Aurobindo had with his attendants and a few others, after the accident to his right leg in November 1938. Besides the recorder, the attendants were: Dr. Mamlal, Dr. Becherlal, Purani, Champaklal, Dr. Satyendra and Mulshanker. As the notes were not seen by Sri Aurobindo himself, the responsibility for the Master's words rests entirely with Nirodbaran. He does not vouch for absolute accuracy, but he has tried his best to reproduce them faithfully. He has made the same attempt for the speeches of the others.)*

FEBRUARY 25, 1940

P : You know Govardhan Das of Punjab ? He was a Congress leader. In 1919 he came here to evade arrest during Non-cooperation. He asked you if he could be arrested here too. You said, "No, one can get protection here." But he was asked by Gandhi to come out of Pondicherry and as soon as he reached Villupuram he was arrested. After that he has been sent to jail many times in connection with the Non-cooperation movement. Afterwards he got a job in some Canada Insurance Company and made money. He is here now and wants to stay and lead a spiritual life.

C : Does this going to jail benefit one ?

SRI AUROBINDO : Benefit in which way ? You get the benefit of the experience of jail. *(Laughter)*

C : I mean : Is one helped in any way by trying to keep one's promise and going to jail ? Should one always keep one's promise ? He had to go from Pondicherry because as a non-violent worker he could not do anything else.

SRI AUROBINDO : If one has made a promise to steal, one is not bound to keep it.

P : Gandhi's view is that one has no right to forsake his duty and, if by doing his duty, he courts arrest he must do it. That is why Gandhi asked Das to come out of Pondicherry. Not only that : one has no right, he says, to break a promise. For instance, he told our Govindbhai that he had deserted his duty and he should go back to nationalist work.

C : Is one bound to keep such promises and does one profit by keeping them ?

SRI AUROBINDO : There is no rule covering all promises. It is not a question of benefit but of doing one's duty. If one has taken up a duty, he has to discharge it so long as he feels bound by it. Otherwise it would be a fault on his part to forsake it. But if he feels that the object which he served has no longer the same value for him, he is no longer bound by any duty.

P : But Gandhi thinks that one can't forsake one's duty once it has been taken up, nor can a promise be broken for any reason.

S : We are mixing up two standards. Gandhi stands for the ethical or moral standard, and anybody abandoning that standard is guilty in his eyes. He does not take his stand on a spiritual standard.

SRI AUROBINDO : The question is not that. The question is whether one is bound to keep one's promise, bound to do one's duty.

C : That is the point on which we want to know your view.

SRI AUROBINDO : One is not bound to keep a promise if there is a call felt for a higher life or if the object or goal of life for which the promise was made has quite changed. Duty exists so long as you are on the moral plane. On the spiritual plane, one has to go where the call of the Spirit leads him. Duty no more binds him.

M : When people come here for *darśan* and don't go back they receive plenty of letters accusing them of forsaking their duty.

SRI AUROBINDO : Yes—and we also receive letters!

M (*after a while*) : Today I got peace again in meditation, Sir. But that gall-bladder pain came back. It comes now and then.

SRI AUROBINDO : Can't you get rid of the habit ?

M : No, Sir. I have left it to the Grace. (*Laughter*)

P : Perhaps you want to keep the habit ?

M : No, no, I don't want to keep it at all.

SRI AUROBINDO : But something in you may want it. Otherwise why should it come ?

M : Which part of me wants it, Sir ? I myself don't know.

SRI AUROBINDO : The body-consciousness may respond to the habit and the vital consciousness may want to accept the law of pain.

P : The *pudgal* perhaps. (*Laughter*)

SRI AUROBINDO : The *pudgals* are hard to deal with.

M : But can't one get rid of them ?

SRI AUROBINDO : Yes, it is possible but rather difficult.

M : Can I follow the process ?

SRI AUROBINDO : Not yet, I think. (*Laughter*)

C : Perhaps some Karma still remains. (*Laughter*)

N (*to M*) : But the pain may be good for you in some way.

M : On the contrary it comes in the way of my divine consciousness. (*Laughter*) I mean that when the pain comes I forget the Divine and all my concentration goes to the pain. I can remember the Divine more when there is no pain.

SRI AUROBINDO : But there are people who forget God when they are happy, and remember more in the midst of suffering.

S (*to M*) : Like the Sufis and the Bhaktas you should rejoice in the suffering and think that it is a message of the Beloved.

N : God may have given you suffering in order to help the growth of your soul.

SRI AUROBINDO : The commentators of Shakespeare say that when he was in trouble he wrote the great tragedies.

M : It is like Nero fiddling when Rome was burning.

SRI AUROBINDO : That is a different matter. God may smile and say, "Suffering will do good to Manilal." (*Laughter*)

N (*to M*) : Is there no gospel of suffering in Jainism ?

P : Yes, there is. Jainism says that suffering helps the soul to grow from a lower to a higher status and that suffering is the result of past Karma.

M : That is *nirjhar*. There are two kinds of suffering : *sakāma* (with desire) and *akāma* (without desire). *Sakāma* is one that one imposes on oneself and *akāma* is what comes uninvited to one.

P : Fasting has a great place in Jainism.

M : Mahavira used to fast for more than 6 months at a time. But I cannot fast at all. When not hungry, I can live on a very little milk.

SRI AUROBINDO : Americans fast for 40 days. Goethe used to take only one meal a day, but that meal was very big.

M : How shall I get rid of this pain in the gall-bladder, Sir ?

N : Concentrate on your Self and forget the pain.

M : I can't forget. If I try, it says, "I am, I am." (*Laughter*)

SRI AUROBINDO : Can't you separate yourself from the body ? You should try to think you are not the body, you are not the mind. Then you don't suffer.

M : No, Sir, I can't separate myself. I try to keep quiet and detached, but when the pain comes, I forget everything. I want to be so strong that nothing will shake me. (*As M said this, he gave S a blow from behind. S started smiling.*)

N : He is emphasising his strength by a blow on Satyen's back.

M : I am not beating Satyen.

P : Nobody beats him.

SRI AUROBINDO : Nobody can beat anybody.

M : It is like the story about Alexander, Sir. Alexander wanted to take away an Indian sadhu with him. The sadhu refused. Alexander threatened him with punishment of death. The sadhu replied : "You have never uttered a greater lie in your life." (*Laughter*) I believe, Sir, that you can take any poison without any harm. You seemed to have said this to somebody, not to me.

SRI AUROBINDO : Neither to anybody else. (*After a pause*) But such a thing is possible. There are people who are like that. They have to do some *kriyā* after taking the poison. Also, one can accustom oneself to poison by taking it in small quantities. You know the story of Mithridates, the great enemy of the Romans. He accustomed himself to all poisons. There was no poison that could kill him. But when he was in danger of being caught by the Romans, he couldn't kill himself by taking poison. He had to ask somebody to slay him.

#### EVENING

S : You have said, Sir, in *The Life Divine* that only the absolute idealist can persist in this path. How, then, can ordinary mortals like us... ?

SRI AUROBINDO (*smiling*) : It is not for ordinary mortals.

S : Even the Vedantic realisation is too high, they say, for the Kaliyuga—and your path is so much longer.

SRI AUROBINDO : Not so much a longer path as a new path—one that has not been trod before by others.

S : Will it be easier for those to come, just because we are treading it ?

SRI AUROBINDO (*again smiling*) : Naturally.

N (*to S*) : But you will have the glory of having been a pioneer.

S : I don't want to be a pioneer. I am satisfied with much less. (*To Sri Aurobindo*) Thinking of your Yoga, Sir, I feel like Arjuna when he laid down his bow after seeing the two vast armies on the battlefield ready to slaughter each other, and said to Krishna : "I am not able to stand and my mind seems to be whirling..."

N : Perhaps you have come as Arjuna in this new play of Krishna.

S : For you it is all right. You have begun with Intuition on the way to Supermind.

SRI AUROBINDO (*referring to N's "famous" intuition about brinjal*) : From Brinjal to Supermind ? (*Laughter*)

S : I am satisfied with the realisation of the Self. Supermind can be left to N.

N : Intuition is the first step to Supermind, isn't it ?

SRI AUROBINDO : First step ?

N : When M asked you what Vivekananda had taught you during your inner contact with him in jail, you replied that he had taught you about Intuition as a first step to Supermind.

SRI AUROBINDO : I may have said it like that, but I didn't mean it as you understand it. What I meant is that one can get a glimpse of Supermind from the Intuition-level, and such a glimpse was my first step.

P (*after a while*) : I believe N feels a little dull tonight for want of discussion on Jainism.

SRI AUROBINDO : How ?

P : Because of Dr. M's departure.

SRI AUROBINDO : Is all that M says about Jainism correct ?

S : He seems to have learnt the popular side more than the philosophic.

SRI AUROBINDO : Their Tirthankaras<sup>1</sup> seem to have tremendous powers which even the Avatars haven't. The Avatars have to fight all the way with Rakshasas like Ravana.

S : Don't the Avatars come for particular purposes and are not they concerned only with them, so that their field of action is limited ?

SRI AUROBINDO : Yes.

S : The Tirthankaras appear to be somewhat like Avatars, because Tirthankar does not allow knowledge to become lost.

<sup>1</sup> the Attained Ones.

SRI AUROBINDO : Can anybody become a Tirthankara ?

S : According to M, they can't.

P : No, they can be siddhas. Siddhas are something like gods, and there are any number of them, whereas the Tirthankaras are only 24 in a cycle.

N : The question is how the Tirthankaras radiate their influence.

P : On that we are not very clear. S was saying that it is something going out from their aura that makes all get the influence and lose their enmity or their lower nature.

S : What comes from the aura is not the same as what Sri Aurobindo has said about something imparted directly by the Guru.

P : They say that wherever a Tirthankara stands, everybody receives according to their language, opening, etc., and all animals forget their nature, just as when the Mother stands in meditation each receives according to his mode of being.

SRI AUROBINDO : That is a different matter. Each one will of course receive in his own language. An Englishman won't receive in Bengali or Gujerati. That depends on the response of the mind, the vital being or whatever it may be. About ahimsa (non-violence), animals feel if a person is really non-violent or not and they approach a person according to it. But what I want to know is whether Jainism accepts any intermediary such as a Guru who helps a disciple in the spiritual path. There are religions like Buddhism which don't believe in such things. Buddhism strongly says that one has to rely on one's own effort. Nobody can help one. By the teachings or precepts or instructions, the path can be shown—that's all—but no other direct and active help can be given. Is that the case in Jainism too ?

P : Yes. They give the example of cow and grass. If the grass is supplied, the cow has to manufacture its own milk from it by its own endeavour. Nobody can help the cow in that process. Tirthankaras are only nimittas (instruments).

N : Surendra Mohan Ghose said to Sahana that there was a rumour in Calcutta that she had been given the BS (Building Service) work as a punishment for her egoism as a singer.

SRI AUROBINDO (*laughing*) : Then Nishikanta has been given cooking work as a punishment for his being a poet ? And isn't Sahana singing every day now ?

N : They must have come to their conclusion at the time when she had stopped her music for a while.

SRI AUROBINDO : And now is her egoism gone since she is singing as well as doing BS work ?

(*To be continued*)

NIRODBARAN

## A PHYSICAL “CONFRONTATION” AND SOME SPIRITUAL ISSUES

(A LETTER)

OF course I am sorry to read the story of your physical “confrontation” but I don’t think it is so very serious an affair as you feel. Your appearance is hardly that of an easily thrashable pigmy or of a habitual shiverer-in-his-shoes. The fellow who threatened you must have seen this and that is why he added the further threat to call his friends to help him deal with you. The calm and inoffensive behaviour you put up was just the right thing—both to impress the bully and to receive the Mother’s help and grace. The bully was impressed and the Mother did come to your protection. Wasn’t it a signal favour to you that the man summoned to assist in pulp- ing you happened to be of a gentle sort and a distant relative of yours to boot ?

No need to blame yourself as a coward just because you did not start fisticuffs at once. One should not confuse fear with discretion or give up discretion merely to show that a lion is hidden in the Yogi. I don’t remember—for that matter—that Krishna anywhere in the Gita calls Arjuna a lion : as far as I can recollect, his highest apostrophic compliment is : “O Bull among the Bharatas !” If I may interpret Krishna *à la* Chesterton, I should say : “A bull is one who is never cowed, yet never bullies.” In the same vein I may define : “A lion is one who leaps to lie on another.” A lion is a beast of prey, seeking to be on the offensive. A bull is a beast of burden, brave but preferring to be on the defensive. A lion is always independent, a bull usually looks up to a master. To play Chesterton again : “A lion in his might ever roars, ‘Let me prey !’ A bull with all his strength still bellows, ‘Let me pray !’” You acted the Gita’s Bull, stood unafraid without being violent, appealed to the Divine and awaited the Divine’s Word for fighting. Even the dejected mood in which you have written to me is not quite un-Gita-like : only, your dejection differs from that of Krishna’s friend in coming after the event instead of before; but the heart-searching is typical.

As to your future line of action, it would be wrong to run away from the field of potential danger. I would not assert that one should never leave such a field. But your circumstances don’t strike me as justifying any packing up. The sudden discovery of a relative, however distant, in the most unexpected place is a sign that the turn of events will be favourable. Carry on your work as this chap has advised you. Possibly your initial mistake was to interfere in somebody else’s wrangle so soon after arrival for service in a strange town. Get settled, get known, get your true character familiarised: then people won’t misunderstand you when you speak out on one side or the other. Maybe there is—in my sense of the term—a bit of a lion lurking within the bull in you and it relishes picking little quarrels. Instead of talking in a quiet tone, expressive

of impartial sobriety and common sense, to the woman who was abusing the School's Headmaster, you may have indignantly raised your voice and sounded aggressive. Rather than appearing somewhat of a hothead on behalf of your boss you should have been your own head-master. Then she might have respected you if not him and stopped abusing him in your presence. Perhaps you don't live consciously enough all the time. Be more self-watchful—and I think you won't get into scrapes.

Now to your question about the Mother's help. No doubt, those who are in what you call "conscious contact" with her can draw her help better in a continuous way. But that does not mean others can't have it effectively. To appeal to her with sincerity and intensity at even an isolated moment ensures response. Even people who do not directly know her can have her aid. You who know her directly and have her as at least the background, if not the foreground, of your life should be more assured of her intervention. You further ask me : "When we call on her, should we completely rely on her and do nothing ourselves but only keep calling her name ?" Surely we should completely rely on her but we should also make certain, when we do nothing, that it is she who makes us do nothing : ourselves to decide to do nothing is actually to do something rather than relying on her ! Mere passivity is no sign of openness or obedience. A quick sensitive feel within oneself of her impulsions is the right thing. Doing something or doing nothing should come out of that feel. No rule can be laid down.

The word "sensitive" which I have used brings me to your own statement : "Life has no charm if I have to live under such humiliations. It is the most sensitive part of me that is being hit often and hit hard." Your sensitiveness is of the wrong type : it is one form of the ego, *amour propre*, self-regard. Self-respect is not wrong, born of a just appraisal of one's positive qualities, the powers particular to one. But there is no reason in the world why one should not be subjected at times to what you call "humiliations". We are not so extraordinary that everybody should show respect for us always. Of course, to humiliate a man hardly argues for a fineness of nature : we should try not to insult anybody, not to make him look cheap. But if somebody is unrefined enough to pull us down, we should not be upset. We should take all circumstances humbly as well as calmly. In fact, we cannot be truly calm without giving up exaggerated notions about ourselves.

However, I must add that true calmness implies our giving up exaggerated notions about others, too. We should not only ask : "Am I so important that nobody should insult me ?" We should also ask : "Are others so important that I should attach value to their insults ?" You will see that the second question, counterbalancing the first, should take away the sting from the latter. Being upset at "humiliations" is due no less to putting others at a premium than to setting a premium on oneself. There should be a quiet discounting on either hand. Often one's sensitiveness on being "humiliated" comes of the imagination that one's lowered condition means the elevated condition of others. But can others be felt as elevated unless you consider them so important that their attitude towards you should matter all the world in your eyes ?



They are men like yourself : if you are not exceptional, neither are they. It is the common element in them that seeks to humiliate you : recognise that stock of poor stuff and refuse to be humiliated by what is akin to the poor stuff in yourself.

Of course, true calmness goes, for its ultimate basis, beyond the equal depreciation of yourself and others. It results from two spiritual realisations. One is the experience of That which is infinite and eternal and single within all beings and things, what the Upanishads term *ātman*, the Self in all. This Self is, first, a supreme stability amidst and above the fluctuations of the phenomenal world. As such, it cannot but be calm. Secondly, as it is undifferentiated, it takes away the ground of feeling that somebody other than oneself interacts with one. Who then humiliates whom ? There is only the One without a second in the universe. Thirdly, *ātman* stands as the mere Witness. It is for ever detached not only from the world outside but also from the world inside, our thoughts, emotions, sensations. It gives no reaction. How will it suffer humiliation or, for that matter, any psychological phase whatever ?

The other spiritual realisation on which true calm is based is the experience of the Psychic Being, the Soul in us, the Upanishads' *antarātman* and *chaitya purusha*. The Psyche is not an undifferentiated and detached stability : it is an evolving consciousness, individualised with a thinking, feeling, sensing personality. But it is a spark, as it were, of the Dynamic Divine and all the values of its response are divine, intrinsically free from the ego and the disequilibriums that accompany the ego-consciousness. It has also an inherent happiness and, although it is intense in its being, its intensity is—to quote a figure from the Gita—a flame burning upward in a windless place. A pure steady dynamism is its nature—pure by being devoted only to the Lord of the universe, the Supreme Person whose Will is behind the whole play of phenomena—steady by being dedicated to the same Supreme Person as enshrined within each being, the Lover of lovers who is at play in every life. How does one figure in the eyes not of oneself or of others, but of this Inmost Beloved Presence, that Utmost Adored Master ? That is the decisive question here and it liberates us from all perturbation.

Some reflex of the Spirit as the single Self and of the Spirit as the Psychic Being we have to catch in our ordinary nature in order to escape at all times from the sense of humiliation—before we have compassed actually the two spiritual realisations that bring true calm in its very essentiality.

You have said at the end of your letter : "Please give practical ways to solve my problem." I don't know whether what I have written will strike you as practical. But it is practical in the sense that it refers to the practice of Yoga in a general way at each step.

8.7.1967

K. D. SETHNA

## SALUTATIONS

(Continued from the issue of August 15)

This is how  
all sincere aspirations  
are fulfilled  
With blessings

1-9-63

9

Bombay  
14-2-1954

Beloved Mother !

Those who are selfish and those who are simply engrossed in their self-interest—how can they ever know the value of their precious moments of life ?

Fragrant lotuses are full-blown in a river and between the lotuses half-opened lilies move their heads with joy to the rhythm of the rippling water and wait for the nectar of the moon. But alas ! suddenly comes a flood, the turmoil of slush and slime shakes the flowers, sweeps away some and drowns the rest.

Similarly in our world there are flowers that have to bear the assault of scandal, mockery, injustice and hatred. And perhaps they too may be caught in the grip of this storm.

Mother ! who knows that I am not one of these unfortunate flowers ? O Mother, stop this havoc of wind and water and save us all.

Bombay  
21-2-1954

O Compassionate, O Eternal Mother !

The dreadful fantasy and the disappointed heart of last night were a severe blow from Nature.

Nothing is impossible for you. First, You pushed me away and then You lifted me up with Love.

Wonderful is this morning ! I am a little relieved. I forget the past and concentrate only on You.

By today's prayer I have won peace. The garland with which I have decked Your picture looks most beautiful. Today You seem to be in full glory.

What have You said to me today ? You appear to be telling me something.

"Child, I have tested You in various ways. But some defects still remain. Right from the very beginning your being has been moulded like this. I know you, I understand you. If you had been brought up with high ideals from the start, you would have gone much further by now but on the stage of the world you were ringed with diverse illusions and you were grieved. All kinds of calamities and blows fell on you. You wept, you struggled to and fro but the result was nil. That was because you could not endure, you could not keep patience.

"Do you know of volcanoes and earthquakes ? In the depths the lava seethes and leaps and then there is the outburst and the lava rushes forth, burning everything. But later it subsides and grows still as if it knew nothing of the havoc it had made.

"Child, the human mind is also shaped in the same way. But at that moment one must have a great deal of patience and quietness and forbearance.

"Child, I know your struggle, but it is only to attain the Divine Love and an atmosphere full of divine Beauty and Art. Why should not even this little aim of yours be achieved ? My blessings of this day are with you so that you may be Mine always, your highest aspiration may be fulfilled. Enjoy happiness and peace and merge in the Divine.

"With courage, faith and patience try to take up the work that is before you. And then whatever you wish will come true.

"But it is not possible to have at once what one wishes. There is no profit in impatient struggle. Express everything with a steady calm. Then the result will be beautiful indeed.

"Why do you fear ? Why is your faith a-tremble ? I am ever with you, ever protecting you and will do so always.

"This is enough for today, my child."

*(To be continued)*

HUTA

## THE FULL-CIRCUIT OF POETRY

### I

THE ancient Rishis must have mused and mused over the recurrent phenomena of stars and constellations appearing periodically at their appointed hours and rhythmic orbits : no wonder that the Muses came wooing them in primary terms of Light and Delight. Imbued as they were with a keen sense of wide-orbed wonder as well as with an innate sense of closeness to the heart of all mystery, they were spontaneously and mediumistically moved to interpret in their own innocent way the strange hieroglyphics that they diurnally witnessed in the brooding silence of deep-creative Night.

★

The gods must be writing poetry even like themselves, a godly pastime that it is: the Rishis must have thought. Resplendent and redolent of beauty and grace as the gods are, they must be surely writing it in characters of gold and fire : they must have likewise felt. And since the gods are immortal,—the Rishis must have gone on to muse—*their* poetry must be a category apart, distinct from all poetry of mortal things with the inevitable ‘touch of tears’ in them; *that* poetry must be something ultra-ineffable and trans-dimensional, in sharp contrast to all poetry of the Earth with its myriads of strident transitory notes and evanescent firefly-gleams.

That beau-ideal of poetry must be worth poring over a million times in the inner recesses of the heart,—an ideal that never gets stale with repeated porings, but rather opens up widening vistas of evergreen things and newer nuances of overtones and undertones with every fresh approach. That Poetry must be, in short, a kind of a Bridge or Barge connecting this world of palpable things and ‘heard melodies’ with other worlds of impalpable things that are ‘prettier far than these’ and melodies ‘unheard’ that are ‘sweeter’ still !

★

And what is more : the Rishis could not help communicating this experience of theirs to whosoever had ‘eyes to see and ears to hear’ : *Devānām paśya kāvyam !* They burst out into native speech and song, how naive or cryptic soever ; they scattered broadcast the seeds of the realisation of something grand and global that they had discovered ; they invited all in poetic fellowship to drink in draughts of the ‘Pierian Spring’ that they had so casually touched and tapped !

The One Integral Light beaming forth from the eyes of the Supreme Poet-Creator had touched their souls and vouchsafed vision unto them; and they had now only to follow in the wake of that Poet *par excellence*—*kaṁvīr maṁśī paribhūḥ swayambhūḥ*—and to further His circuit of Light differentiating itself into several grades and worlds of Delight; and, having circumambulated the whole Universe,—with

wings of Imaginative Vision glancing 'from heaven to earth, from earth to heaven'—  
to orientate back into Pristine Light-Delight !

## II

This, then, is the Primary Circuit of Light-Delight that has touched all poetic souls in one way or another from 'years sempiternal', *śāśwatībhyaḥ samābhyaḥ*—this ubiquitous Gift of the Lord Himself as 'joy in widest commonalty spread' in universal Nature. It touches even grosser souls in moments of rare exaltation and intuitive insight : witness Byron of no gossamer-make inducing its direct current when he echoes in a major key the thundering roll of the ocean or ejaculates the 'Eureka' of the ancient Seer in a minor key :

Ye Stars, that are the Poetry of Heaven !

It was this current that touched both Wordsworth and Valmiki alike with recurrent frequency, and sent them to rhapsody with especial concurrence in their 'Daffodils' and *Pampā Sarasī* respectively. Just scrutinise the magic of Light-Delight getting inversely imaged and accurately caught on the sensitive screens of their 'inward eye', and brought out in positive print-script of no ambiguous vibratory import. Listen, too, to their parallel testimony to the Logic of the Magic—a testimony of no ordinary psychological import :

A Poet could not but be gay  
In such a jocund company !

and

*Kasmāi nāyam ruchirasaraso rochate tīrabhāgaḥ !*

(Whose heart leaps not up to behold this blessed lakeside ?)

★

And what did that Browning do—even that poet of robust commonsense and metallic intellect—when he put those quizzical-climactic lines in the Spring-time-frisksong of his mediumistic Pippa ?

God's in His Heaven :  
All's right with the world !

Did he not himself mediumistically attempt 'to recapture the first fine rapture' of the Vedic Rik addressed to Lord Savitar ?—

*Chitram devānāmudagānīkam chakṣurmitrasya varuṇasvagneḥ*

(Lo! the picture of All-encompassing Majesty : the Eye of the Triune Lord openeth !)

★

It is the same vibration all over, touching all kindred souls and uniting them in a bond of common poetic experience and utterance, so that it is natural and inevitable to find notations thereof in varying pitch and shade in all literature of the world, in multiple echoes and images 'that go on growing evermore !'

The new community thus marked out is best described in the sacramental words of that Communion itself: *Apāma somam amṛtā abhūma* of the Vedic Poet getting seconded in 'He on honey-dew hath fed, And drunk the Milk of Paradise!' And what is more, the Vibration has elicited flintlike flashes of phrase and form from all responsive chords, that have got concretised into 'records' capable of reproducing and revivifyng the Vibration 'in vacant or in pensive mood' *ad infinitum!*

And what shall we say of the psychic Light-Delight of 'the True-the Good-the Beautiful' evidenced in a thousand situations of everyday life and evinced in a thousand patterns of human behaviour and character? We know too well how the poets have unerringly spotted them out and failed not to exhibit or extol them; we know, too, how they have never wearied to play endless variations on that One Theme of entrancing interest and perennial mystery—the Theme of Love—wherein psychic Light-Delight are inalienably fused and are yet found playing their sweet and eternal Game of Hide-and-Seek!

### III

And Night is but another name-form or rhyme-mask of Light. As on the physical plane it is the ordinary night that reveals to us the wonder and wealth of the galaxies of Light, so on the psychological plane it is the Night of suffering and sorrow that reveals to us the hidden glories and splendours of the Light of the Spirit. Hence we have now a secondary circuit of Night-Light of a complexer genesis—an alternate current, shall we say?—whereof we have a most elementary enunciation or registration in these lines of Tennyson:

And what am I?—

An infant crying in the Night,

An infant crying for the Light,

And with no language but a cry!

—Good that he could at last find even the language of a cry—for, who knows what may or may not have transpired, if his tongue-tied grief had not permitted him 'to utter the thoughts that arose in him', which found vent in the end through that cry in sob after sob of a long-drawn-out cameo-commentary—*In Memoriam!*

★

When Shelley adumbrated that theory of his in the lines—

Poets are cradled into poetry by wrong:

They learn in suffering what they teach in song—

he formulated not only the genesis and genre of his own poetry, but also attested to the truth of this secondary circuit of Night-Light. Do we not feel and inhale the very essence of both radiating from his token-lines like these registering that circuit?—

Our sweetest songs are those that tell of saddest thought...

or

If Winter comes, can Spring be far behind ?  
And Coleridge was not far behind in laying down his testimony, too, in lines that distil the veriest essence of the foregoing ones:

Dewdrops are the gems of morning,  
But the tears of mournful eve !

★

If in this constant process of registration, we have at one end of the scale such bulbul-tarang notes of exquisite anguish and poignant melody, we have at the other end of the scale organ-notes of excruciating anguish and earnest invocation such as Milton's :

Seasons return, but not to me returns  
Day, or the sweet approach of even or morn,  
Or sight of vernal bloom, or summer's rose,  
Or flocks or herds, or human face divine :  
But cloud instead and ever-during dark...  
So much the rather, Thou Celestial Light,  
Shine inward, and the mind, thro' all its powers,  
Irradiate ! There plant eyes : all mist from thence  
Purge and disperse !

Or, Tagore's

The rain has held back for days and days, my Lord, in this arid heart. The horizon is fiercely naked : not the thinnest cover of a soft cloud, not the vaguest hint of a cool shower ! Send thy angry storm, dark with death, if it is thy wish, and with lashes of lightning startle the sky from end to end ! But call back, my Lord, O call back, this pervading silent heat, still and keen and cruel, burning the heart with dire despair !

#### IV

That brings us to the tertian circuit of a yet complexer genesis—of *Śabda-śūnya*—of Creative Word rising out of the seeming Void and the Potent Word leading us back to the re-creative Void. It is a process analogous to that of the pearl-fisher's dive—staking his all and plunging into the Void—for a handful of pearls and gems : the Ratnakara (ocean) delights indeed to yield its Ratnas (gems) to the brave and the intrepid, who venture to size up its 'dark unfathomed caves' with their own enormous self and rifle its rock-bottom to seize its aeonic treasured things !

Suffering and sorrow no doubt attenuate the frontiers of the ego ; aspiration and invocation complete the work of chrysalis-action, if not a sudden shock battering

down the last barriers ; but a definitive plunge, too, has once to be taken by the sense-ridden consciousness, before it can hope to lay hands on crystallised form and scintillating word, the gems of the poetic craft.

★

What Kalidasa envisaged apropos of his illustrious sire-predecessor and epigrammed in that classical quip of his :

*Ślokatwamāpadyata yasya śokaḥ*

(Whose Sorrow was transmuted into Song)—

has to be supplanted or supplemented by a slight variation thereon :

*Śabdatwamāpadyata yasya śunyam*

(Whose Void was fruited into Word).

And, then, the full import of Lowell's lines apropos of Minerva in his 'Bardling' will also ring clear into our ears :—

'Tis not the singer's wish that makes the song ;

The Rhythmic Beauty wanders dumb, how long,

Nor stoops to any daintiest instrument ;

Till, found the mated lips, their sweet consent

Makes mortal breath than Time or Fate more strong.

★

It would be only through a kind of Yoga—a Yoga of surrender to the Great Taskmaster's Will or, if you please, a Yoga of just 'standing and waiting' or even 'standing and staring', or a Yoga of self dedication or self-forgetfulness—that 'harmonious numbers' would begin to flow, and 'a Poem such as posterity would not willingly let die' could be written. It would be only when all the scattered rays of the consciousness are marshalled and brought to bear on some fiery focal point, that the Poet would be born into *Śabda-Brahma*, as Bhavabhuti would say, and 'the immortal afflatus of swan-seated Saraswati's spirit-artistry' would take over charge of the poet's quill.

Worlds, not merely words, would then await the waving of the Poet's wand, and 'a local habitation and a name' could then be given to 'airy nothing' and even 'such stuff as dreams are made on' ! Has not this been plentifully demonstrated by the mint-owner of this current coin ? Did not his frustration-void release springs of creativity *in excelsis*?

## V

So far we have mainly talked about the modes and mysteries of the genesis of poetry ; we may now passingly touch upon the modes of its functioning and its meaning for human life on Earth. All poets worth the name have booked up their apprenticeship for the One Adventure of life, 'the Adventure of the Apocalypse' ; at least they have attested their signatures to the standing 'Invitation' of 'Who will come with me ? Who will climb with me ?' Their Books are there,



transcribed from the plane of their *akṣara* or immutable selves on the plane of the *kṣara* or mutable things, in imperishable letters or characters, *akṣaras*. The Books abide with us, palpably and perpetually, even though their embodiments in flesh and blood may have disappeared from our midst—haply to re-appear as ‘stars that shine upon the Aral Sea’ from newer aerial firmaments !

\*

And ‘Spirits are not finely touched but to fine issues’ : they touch us and teach us, almost hourly or even momentarily, in a variety of ways, the agency of Words and Letters not being the last in the list. But earthy creatures that we are, the spirit-spark is soon lost in our clay ; and we sink into grooves of dead routine that is but another name for ‘Letter’ which kills, when unredeemed by the quickening Touch of ‘Spirit’. Perhaps that was why irrepressible and over-ebullient Whitman prefixed that demonstrative note to his ‘Leaves’ in full-American style : ‘Reader, beware ! Who touches this touches a Man.’ Was it to sting us or string us up to the supreme effort of the Spirit that is pre-requisite to right reading of poetry and true appreciation thereof ? ...

When Kalidasa equated, in those propitiatory lines of his, the perfect equipoise of *vāk* and *artha*—of Spirit and Sense—with the perfect equipoise of the Parents of all Creation, did he not intuitionally discern and discover for all of us the bed-rock-truth that the circuit of creation would be complete only when the unmanifest Perfection of Spirit is fulfilled and balanced by the manifest Perfection of the Revelatory Word ? And can we not deduce a corollary therefrom that the perfect act of appreciation stems from a perfect apprehension of this truth ??

\*

Apprehended and understood in this way, Poetry would no more be a handmaid or a ‘devadasi’ ministering or purveying to the life of the senses ; she can indeed reveal ‘the truest sense and form’ of what we have only heard in word or name ; She has all the insignia and investiture of a Devi indeed, sealing or unsealing, at will, ‘magic casements’ of the spirit. Just feel the charm of a simple line like this : ‘And the hours pass away like dreams un-lived’—a line that is instinct with all the graces of poetry—and then pass on to feel the amulet-charm of these lines, wherein is deposited seed-wise all the potency of a Rishi’s Seer-Will :

Heaven in its rapture dreams of perfect Earth :  
Earth in her sorrow dreams of perfect Heaven !

CHIMANBHAI

## HYMNE A LA DEESSE

Déesse adorée, sous tes aspects multiples,  
Mon cœur enivré, aime à Te contempler !  
Tu es l'âme du monde et pour Tes disciples  
Le Trésor sans prix, qu'un Dieu nous a donné !

Tu sembles une si jeune fille, parfois !  
Au fier profil très pur, au beau regard baissé,  
Si mince sous Tes voiles, qu'on peut voir qu'en Toi  
L'Esprit seul existe, flamme jamais lassée.  
Parfois sous Ta tiare et Tes riches lamés,  
Surbrodés d'or, par de pieuses mains aimées,  
Icône prestigieuse, Tu ressuscites  
La splendeur d'Egypte, et celle de Byzance,  
Ton lourd regard d'émeraude et d'or suscite  
L'Infini dans nos âmes, et l'attirance  
De l'absolue Beauté, s'ajoute à Ta Divinité.  
Corps et âme, à Toi nous sommes, O Déesse,  
O Shakti suprême ! Ta multiplicité  
D'action embrasse les mondes et ne cesse  
Jamais, car partout elle se manifeste  
Ici c'est le Silence ; là c'est le Geste,  
Le Verbe, le Mouvement.—Tu embrasses tout  
O Mère ! O Déesse très sainte, surtout  
Merci d'être si grande, car par Toi, ainsi  
Notre soif d'Infini s'apaise et remercie.

★

Certains soirs où les couchants cuivrés  
Versent dans le ciel des torrents de lumière,  
Sur Ta terrasse Tu montes, à nos regards charmés  
Tu parais soundam, Toi, notre amour ; La Mère.  
Se détachant en fresque sur le fond lumineux  
De ce ciel de l'Inde si clair et prestigieux,  
Ton sary très léger claque avec la brise,  
Moulant, parfois, Ton corps si étroitement,  
Que Tu es une simple femme...Un moment !  
...Mais de Toi, vers nous, s'envolent tant de choses,

Nos âmes, nos corps tressaillent sous ces courants  
De Force, de Lumière qui sur chacun se posent.  
Et nous sommes seulement, dans les fiers couchants,  
Des vases qui s'ouvrent sous Ta pression sacrée,  
Des fleurs qui respirent Ta lumière nacrée ;  
Tu souris et Tu passes, O ma Déesse,  
Silhouette tanagréenne sur Ton lourd piédestal,  
Cube fabuleux, où se mêlent sans cesse,  
La Matière et l'Esprit...et c'était fatal,  
Que ce bloc sacré où Ton pied nu se pose,  
Fût la demeure grandiose et sainte d'un Dieu ;  
Le présent Avatar—Sri Aurobindo Ghose—  
Est l'hôte, trois fois saint, de cet auguste lieu !

★

Ce sont là, des aspects de Toi, O adorée,  
Que chacun peut voir avec ses yeux de chair ;  
Mais il en est Un, formidable et sacré,  
Qui nous est révélé, certains soirs très clairs,  
Quand les sens endormis, l'Esprit seul demeure,  
La conscience élargie perçoit Ta Lumière ;  
La Divine Shackti, à l'œuvre, à cette heure  
Nocturne dilate, brûle, purifie, éclaire,  
Prépare l'habitable pour le Dieu qu'Elle éveille,  
Et cela...maternellement, dans notre sommeil.

SUVRATA (YVONNE R GAEBELE)

*(Ecrit en 1937 lorsque La Mère se promenait le soir sur le terrasse du 1<sup>er</sup> étage)*

## HYMN TO THE GODDESS

My heart, O Goddess adored,  
Rapturous with Thy multiple aspects,  
Loves to contemplate Thee !  
Thou art the soul of the world,  
And for Thy disciples the priceless treasure  
Given to us by the Divine.

Thou lookest like a girl so young, sometimes !  
Thy beautiful gaze toward the earth inclined,  
Thy profile so noble, so pure,  
Thou so slender in Thy silk, one may surmise that in Thee  
Only the spirit exists, a flame never weary.  
Sometimes under Thy tiara and Thy garments richly threaded,  
Embroidered in gold by hands pious and loving,  
Glorious icon, Thou revivest  
The splendour of Egypt and the splendour Byzantine,  
Thy heavy gaze of emerald and gold evokes  
The Infinite to our souls and the magnet  
Of Absolute Beauty adds to Thy Divinity !  
Body and soul, Thine are we, O Goddess, O Shakti Supreme !  
The multiplicity of Thy action embraces the world and never ceases  
For it manifests through all ;  
Here is the Silence, there is the Gesture, the Word, the Movement.  
Thou embracest all, O Mother ! O Goddess, most holy !  
O Mother, thanks to Thee for being so great,  
Through Thee our thirst for the Infinite is quenched,  
Thanks again to Thee.

★

Certain evenings when the bronze sunsets  
Pour in the skies the torrents of light,  
On Thy terrace Thou comest, before our charmed eyes  
Suddenly Thou appearest, Thou, our Love : The Mother.  
Frescoed against the luminous background  
Of the Indian sky, so clear and glorious,  
Thy light sari flutters with the breeze  
Clinging, sometimes, to Thy body so intimately

That Thou appearest a simple woman...a moment !...  
 But from Thee fly to us so many things,  
 Our souls, our bodies tremble under the currents  
 Of Force, of Light, settling on each.  
 And in the noble sunsets we are  
 Only the vessels, opening under Thy sacred pressure,  
 Only the flowers breathing Thy light iridescent;  
 Thou smilest and Thou passest, O my Goddess,  
 Tanagra silhouette on Thy heavy pedestal,  
 Fabulous cube where fuse unceasingly  
 Matter and Spirit ..and it was destined  
 That this sacred block, where tread Thy naked feet,  
 Be the abode majestic and holy of a God :  
 The present Avatar—SRI AUROBINDO—  
 Is the guest, thrice holy, of this august place.

★

These are some aspects of Thine, O adored one,  
 That each with his ordinary eyes can see,  
 But of these is One, formidable and sacred,  
 Which to us is revealed, some evenings, some evenings very clear,  
 When, with the senses in sleep, the Spirit alone lives,  
 The consciousness enlarged perceives Thy Light;  
 The Divine Shakti, at work, this nocturnal hour,  
 Dilates, burns, purifies, illumines,  
 Prepares the habitation for the God whom She awakes—  
 And all this, maternally, within our sleep.

*(Written in 1937 when The Mother used to walk on the first floor terrace in the evening)*

*Translated by Shyam Sundar from the French*

# LIFE IN SRI AUROBINDO ASHRAM

*(Continued from the issue of August 15)*

## ART OF LIVING AND YOGA

THE art of living does not comprise only the aesthetic sense ; the inner being must be made beautiful first so that the outer may reflect it and add beauty to all one does, to all one sets his hands to. Even those who are in plenty do not know how to lead a happy and contented life. Mere collection and possession of things does not make life opulent and luminous.

Leading a comfortable life is also not enough. One may have all the luxuries of life but if there is no "inner rest," inner peace, nothing will make a joyous living.

Here begins the role of yoga. Its first demand is to clear all the rubbish that has been accumulated within for ages and make room for all that is good, that is beautiful. If the inner is pure it will breathe its own atmosphere and lend charm and sweetness to all one is and all one does.

Yoga teaches how to live in peace. Only he who is free from tension, free from worry, can live in peace. How little is man's capacity to enjoy life! It is only the gods who know how to lead a happy and joyous life. Because they are masters of their own house and not slaves of passion like us. How can he who is a slave in his own house expect happiness for himself ?

So long as one lives in darkness, breathes in darkness, acts in darkness one is bound to be in conflict not only with his own nature but with those with whom he has to deal. Yoga brings light into life and a rhythm which makes life sweet.

Let the Divine shine in your life, then see what changes take place in you. It is open to all to make an experiment and discover for themselves what reward yoga offers to life.

It is often asked, "Can Sri Aurobindo's yoga solve the riddle that is man's life ? How does his yoga affect our day-to-day life ? Has his yoga a place in the social, political, economic fields of the country ?"

The Master has written volumes on the subject. We shall only touch on the point in our humble way.

The eye of the modern world is on the economic aspect of an undertaking, whatever its sphere ; even politics to-day is dominated by economics.

We make big plans but in the long run some flaw or other shows itself. Why ? Because it was done by one who had no true vision, no capacity to read the turn of the future.

At present our destiny is in the hands of politicians. Their action are directed by the light of the mind which is a seat of Ignorance. Consequently, however

sincere they may be in their attempts to “do good” to others, to the country or to the world, they can be no source of peace and harmony for all. To quote Sri Aurobindo :

“...so long as man has not come within measurable distance of self-knowledge and has not set his face towards it, he cannot escape from the law of external compulsion and all his efforts to do so must be in vain. He is and always must be, so long as that lasts, the slave of others, the slave of his family, his caste, his clan, his Church, his society, his nation ; and he cannot but be that and they too cannot help throwing their crude and mechanical compulsion on him, because he and they are the slaves of their own ego, of their own lower nature.”<sup>1</sup>

If the man at the helm is one endowed with vision and open to Truth, whatever his field of action, he will be able to do the right thing in the right way. These words will carry weight and there will be far less chance of discontent and disharmony.

The same principle holds good in our day-to-day life, be it political, social or economic. For instance, if an engineer has, at least, some higher faculties his work is likely to be much less faulty. If over and above he has a psychic opening he will be guided not only at the critical moments of his life but at every step. Experience confirms that true reliance on the Divine not only facilitates an automatic arrangement of things but can give even a difficulty a favourable turn. Moments are not rare when a clear guidance comes like a whisper of God. But it is not easy to arrive at this stage. How to reach this stage is the work that is going on in the Ashram under the Mother’s unfailing guidance. The pity is that we are not able to draw much from “her rich store.”

Of all the marvel and beauty that are hers  
Only a darkened little we can feel.

*(Concluded)*

NARAYAN PRASAD

#### AUTHOR’S NOTE

In the issue of August 15 the number of Huta’s paintings was given as 460. The correct number is 470.

<sup>1</sup> *The Human Cycle* (1st. Ed., 1949) p. 319.

## **A SRI AUROBINDO CENTER IN ARIZONA, U.S.A. CRESCENT MOON RANCH**

DURING a recent visit to the Sri Aurobindo Ashram in Pondicherry, a question was asked by Narayan Prasad, a member of the Ashram and author of *Life in Sri Aurobindo Ashram*, as to how Crescent Moon Ranch became a Sri Aurobindo Center. It started the following train of thought :

Possibly it began, long ago, in 1935 with a trip to India and the contact with Sri Aurobindo through his writings.

The next link in the chain of events was a friendship with Margaret Woodrow Wilson, on my return to America, based on our mutual interest in Sri Aurobindo. The link with Sri Aurobindo and his Ashram grew stronger when Margaret sailed to India to join the Ashram in 1938, where she remained until her death in 1944. Her letters from the Ashram were and always will be spiritual reinforcement.

The spiritual activity at Crescent Moon Ranch began with our move to Sedona in 1953 ; a handful of interested people ; a visit from Dr. Haridas Chaudhuri, which grew into annual visits, and seminars until we became a branch of the cultural Intergration Fellowship, founded by Dr. Chaudhuri, in San Francisco.

After the event of A.B. Purani's visit to the Center here in 1962, another strong link with the Ashram in Pondicherry, India, was forged. The chain continued to grow with our second visit to the Ashram in 1964, following Purani's visit to us. We had met Purani in 1961, our first visit to the Ashram. With the passing of time, it becomes clear that our meeting must have been intended. It seems that Purani felt at once that it was not by accident.

By this time, Crescent Moon Ranch seemed to be growing as a spiritual center with an increasing affinity and connection with the Sri Aurobindo Ashram in India. However, it was not until April 24th, 1966, that we received the Blessings of the Mother to be a Sri Aurobindo Center in Sedona, Arizona.

Purani had written, before coming to Crescent Moon Ranch, that a spiritual work would be done. It was doubtless he who brought the flame.

This Sri Aurobindo Center is situated in an amazingly colourful area, with rock formations of fantastic shapes that glow in the setting sun. The spirit of the place is one of ethereal beauty, enhanced by the happy sound of water from "Oak Creek" that winds its way through the ranch. Because of the water, this is an oasis of green pastures, fruit trees, and growing things.

The cherished aspiration is that this Center may also be an oasis of spiritual Peace, nourished with the flow of dedicated souls. So far, there is a place for meetings and lectures. Those of similar interests gather to study together, discuss and listen to tapes (there are many of Purani's excellent lectures during his stay with us, on the



writings of his beloved Master, Sri Aurobindo) as well as other tapes. There is a small dwelling for meditation, named "Purani Nivas" in honor of the late A. B. Purani, beloved by all who knew him.

If one wishes to retreat for one or two weeks of meditation, quiet, and study, there is a modern, well equipped trailer with a beautiful view, or there is a place for camping with kitchen and bathroom facilities. These accommodations are, of course, available also for lectures or seminars. The surrounding scene is serene and inspiring, conducive to communion with Nature and the Divine Inhabitant.

There is quite an extensive library, open to all, covering a wide range of philosophical subject matter, including the various teachings of both the East and the West.

Sri Aurobindo, being in his life and in his writings a bridge between the East and the West, the past and the present, has been called a "great reconciler." A Sri Aurobindo Center is naturally motivated by this ideal of expanding horizons.

LOIS DUNCAN

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## AN AUROBINDONIAN AT DURHAM UNIVERSITY, ENGLAND

(Continued from the issue of August 15)

IN 1957, I was invited by the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Israel, to deliver a course of lectures on Hinduism and to take two Seminars. I enjoyed my visit to Israel very much. Israel is full of history, and Jerusalem has a distinctive and congenial atmosphere. I was pleasantly surprised to find great freedom of thought in the University. The lectures went off very well and the occasion was made memorable by the unannounced arrival of Mr. David Ben Gurion, the then Prime Minister of Israel, at my last lecture which was on "The Integral Yoga of Sri Aurobindo".

I think I am right in saying that Mr. Ben Gurion was very impressed by Sri Aurobindo's analysis of the psychological forces determining social evolution and his vision of the future of collective life.

A few days earlier I had had a long talk with Mr. Ben Gurion at his home in Tel Aviv. He has a splendid library and I was agreeably surprised to find an enormous collection of books on Buddhism of which he is a keen student. He is a very witty man, full of zest, curiosity and desire for knowledge. We had a little talk on Buddha and Buddhism and I tried to show that the teachings of the Enlightened One were incomplete. When Mr. Ben Gurion came to my lecture, I told him that I took his attendance as a tribute to Indian Culture and Hinduism in particular. "Not a bit, I am looking forward to your lecture," he said quietly and, with a twinkle in his eye, added, "but don't you dare criticise Buddha." "Sir," I replied, "I am afraid I cannot guarantee that." At the end of the lecture, I went to him and thanked him and said that he had told me during our last meeting that he was going to have a difficult session of the Knesset (the Israeli Parliament) that evening. "Yes," he said smilingly, "we had a difficult session but they didn't manage to throw me out."

I was informally asked by the appropriate persons at Hebrew University to stay on as Associate Professor and to organise there the study of the Indian religions. I had to decline this invitation because I could not then leave Durham where I was doing the same thing.

Next year, Hebrew University invited Dr. T. R. V. Murti, the well-known writer on Mahayana Buddhism, to deliver a course of lectures on Buddhism. I am glad to report to the readers of *Mother India* that as a result of our visits to Israel, Indian Philosophy and Religion are now regularly taught at Hebrew University.

Another memorable experience was my visit in 1960 to the Institute of Ecumenical Studies, Céligny, Switzerland. The Institute is an organisation of the World Council of Churches which has its headquarters at Geneva. I was invited to deliver

a course of lectures on Hinduism and conduct two seminars. Students come from all over the world to the Institute and three languages are used in its deliberations : French, German and English. This is made possible by a very efficient system of simultaneous translation. The students are all trained in Christian theology and some of them were very brilliant, especially the contingent from Germany was very learned and scholarly. But I am sorry to say that in spite of their learning they have very little spiritual optimism. I crossed philosophical swords with them because they declared that salvation was just not possible. In my lecture on Hinduism, I was making the point that salvation or rather liberation was not only possible of attainment but could be achieved even during one's lifetime. I asked them : "If salvation is not possible, what is Christianity about ?" The answer in effect was : "It is the task of Christianity to see that man does not become in any way less human and more sinful. The injunctions and prohibitions of Christian ethics are designed to tell man that he should turn towards God and try to carry out His will not because it would lead to salvation but in order not to become a worse sinner." I was amazed at this strong lack of conviction about the spiritual fulfilment of man. During my second visit to the Institute a few years later, I did not come across the same pessimism among the students and met one or two who had not only faith in the redeeming love of Christ but also a touch of the breath of the Spirit.

In London, the Sri Aurobindo Study Centre had been opened before I arrived in England. But it was not very active and in consultation with one or two of the founding members of the Centre, I decided that some regular activity had to be organised. It was not till 1956 that we could organise regular meetings. I would like to report a talk I had with the Mother in 1958 in this connection.

The Mother graciously gave me a long interview during which I brought up the question of the activities of the Centre. One of our members, Miss D. Tomlinson, who stayed at the Ashram for a few months, had specifically asked me to discuss the Centre and its work with the Mother. The Mother asked me what I had done. I replied that I had got the members to agree that there should be regular meetings, once a fortnight or in three weeks according to the convenience of the members but regular meetings there must be and there were such meetings being held. The Mother said this was absolutely right. "Even if there is only one person, the meeting should be held," she said confirming my own idea.

I then said that some members felt the Centre was not expanding and at times they became rather disappointed and wondered whether the Centre should not be closed down. The Mother again asked me what I felt about it. When I said that I had told my fellow members that, once opened, the Centre should not be closed down, she kept silent for a few moments and then said very firmly, "Tell Miss Tomlinson and others that even if the members there have not got the Light, they may yet become the source of Light for others." I would very much like to urge upon people, who are founding Sri Aurobindo Centres or branches of Sri Aurobindo Society in different parts of India and the world, the need to meditate on these very

significant words of the Mother. The Divine works in mysterious ways and when and through whom He will inspire some seeker to aspire after the spiritual life it is not for us to judge. All we can do is to seek to be his humble instruments.

Since that time, the Centre has been holding two annual meetings, one in August and the other in December. It has been possible to invite some eminent people and professors of Philosophy or of Comparative Religion either to address these meetings or to take the Chair. One of them, Professor H. D. Lewis of King's College, London, where I once gave four lectures including one on Sri Aurobindo, gave a very fine address on "The Concept of Individuality in Sri Aurobindo's Philosophy". Last year he came out with a book called *Philosophy of Religion* in which he has made a number of appreciative references to Sri Aurobindo's ideas. Professor Ninian Smart, who has been appointed Professor of Religious Studies at Lancaster university, also spoke at one of these meetings comparing Sri Aurobindo's vision of History with the ideas of Teilhard de Chardin.<sup>1</sup> Dr. E. G. Parrinder, Reader in Comparative Religion, King's College, London, was also one of our speakers and gave a very good lecture: "Sri Aurobindo on Incarnation and the Love of God." This has been published in the well-known journal of Comparative Religion, *Numen*.<sup>2</sup>

At another session of the International Association for the History of Religions, held at Marburg, Germany, I spoke on "Christian Pantheism, Spiritual Evolution and Sri Aurobindo". My lecture was a comparison between the thought of Sri Aurobindo and that of Chardin. I tried to make the point that the idea of the descent of Spirit into Matter and the evolution of the spiritual soul out of Matter to its original free status beyond the universe is a very old concept in Indian thought. I also pointed out that the Self's hierarchical formulation in the world is also an old idea in India. I further said that Chardin did not really have the vision of a new evolution but only of a wider extension of what had already been realised, namely spiritual love, by mystics and saints, and that the Supermind had not yet established itself on the earth though it was inevitable that it would do so, and that Sri Aurobindo's was a more authentic vision of spiritual evolution.

The University of Cambridge once asked me to deliver four lectures and I gave two on Buddhism and two on Hinduism, one of which was on Sri Aurobindo. The response was very warm and encouraging. Since 1967, when these lectures were delivered, I have been asked several times more to lecture in Cambridge. The Society for the Study of Religion, Cambridge, arranges meetings on the different religions and spiritual philosophies of the world and I had the privilege of addressing its members several times.

Very often people ask questions on Sri Aurobindo's philosophy and yoga during discussion at the end of a lecture. My experience is that there is a seeking for a new,

<sup>1</sup> This lecture was reproduced in *Mother India*, December 5 1961, with an Editor's Note of appraisal following it.

<sup>2</sup> *Mother India* will be republishing Dr. Parrinder's lecture in the issue of December 5.

comprehensive life-affirming and pragmatic philosophy and, when Sri Aurobindo's ideas are presented in a manner intelligible to the Western mind, there is always an encouraging response. One difficulty is that Sri Aurobindo's books are not easily available in England. He is not yet really very well-known in that country. One reason for this, I think, is that none of his books has actually been published there. If some arrangement could be made for reissuing some of his books in England and if they were to be reviewed in the leading philosophical journals and good Sunday and daily newspapers, they would be more widely known. I remember that a few years ago the Poetry Society of London invited me to deliver a lecture on the "Poetry of Sri Aurobindo". There were several young poets present at the meeting. At the end of my lecture, there were a number of questions and I had to read out more poems than I had planned to illustrate my points. When they asked me where they could get Sri Aurobindo's volumes of poems, I could only give them the names of two or three book-shops in London which I knew kept a stock of his works, but most probably these did not include any poetry. I actually had to lend my personal copy of *Last Poems* to a woman who was interested to read more of Sri Aurobindo's poetry.

Since October 1966 Hinduism has been included as an alternative paper in the Theology Tripos Course at Cambridge University. The Gita has been put as the main text and the commentaries of Sankara, Ramanuja, Sridhara Swami, Bal Gangadhar Tilak, Sri Aurobindo and Sri Krishna Prem are part of the course.

In 1961 I was asked by the American Philosophical Association to be one of the six (or eight) guest speakers invited from Britain to one of its conferences. This was held at Lake Arrowhead, Los Angeles. The University of California maintains the place as a venue for colloquiums and conferences, and what a beautiful place it is ! All facilities are there for intellectual work and recreation including a tennis court and a swimming pool. Among the guest speakers from Britain were Dr. A. C. Ewing and Prof. A. J. Ayer. The theme of the conference was 'Tolerance, Its Nature and Limits'. In my lecture I said that the word Tolerance had various meanings and that I was not using it in the sense of 'putting up with', I went on to speak of real understanding of the views and behaviour of others, which may not lead to agreement with and approval of their ideas or conduct. But I explained that if one understood the reasons and motives of other people's ideas and conduct, one might become more tolerant. Did not Sri Aurobindo say that people are much less deliberate in their thoughts and acts than they think they are ?

I vigorously maintained that tolerance must not be extended to the acceptance of aggression and tyranny and that the use of physical force was perfectly justified in certain circumstances. This caused a controversy but I think I managed to silence my critics. Sri Aurobindo's analysis of non-violence and its limits as given in *Essays on the Gita* was a great help to me in this connection.

A few years ago I was invited to preach a sermon at the St. Botolph's Church in London. The invitation was jointly sponsored by the World Congress of Faiths, founded by the late Sir Francis Younghusband, and the Vicar of the said Church.

I chose "Religion and World Peace" as the theme of my sermon. After briefly analysing the world scene since the Second World War, I developed the idea of the Growing Soul of Humanity as the true basis of world unity. As the readers of *Mother India* will know, Sri Aurobindo has written on this subject most realistically and inspiringly on *The Ideal of Human Unity*. After the sermon many people came to me and said that they found the concept of the collective soul of mankind a fascinating idea and that they felt convinced that the key to human unity was psychological and therefore ultimately spiritual.

In the United States, I had the privilege of delivering two lectures at the University of Stanford. One of them on *The Human Cycle* caused a spirited discussion which centred on the idea of intuition as the next leader of collective life instead of either ideas of the mind dominated by the vital being or the unenlightened reason, even if it is not dominated by life-impulses. The other lecture on *Savitri* was devoted mostly to the reading of long passages from it.

After a general introduction about the symbolic character of the great epic, I read out selections from it because I felt that the best thing was to let its mantric power have its impact on the audience which was deeply moved by its grandeur.

On the whole, I should say that the message of Sri Aurobindo is making itself heard in England and other foreign countries, and those who are slightly open to new ideas and ideals and have the capacity to shed their previous habits of thought appreciate his vision of the future. Let us hope that this vision will before long take material shape with the willing co-operation of seekers in East and West.

(Concluded)

ARINDAM BASU

## FROM TWO LETTERS OF TEILHARD DE CHARDIN\*

### A *SINE QUA NON* FOR HUMAN SURVIVAL

It seems to me that on a higher level than the confused currents of moribund democracy and nascent Communism and Fascism—and of an ageing Christianity, too, that no longer informs the material world—there should be some way of grouping the ‘elect’ who have made up their minds to build the earth on the three ‘columns’ of Universalism, Futurism and Personalism ; which would bring together the warring fragments of religion. In the light of the present conflict, one could profitably look into the problem of the technical means best adapted to the end we seek. Such a reformation may seem utopian. But it seems at the same time to be a *sine qua non* for human survival. And I do not think that humanity can perish.

(October 1936)

### SPIRITUAL EVOLUTION

THE sense of the Earth, as it unfolds and bursts open upwards in the direction of God ; and the sense of God, as He thrusts his roots downwards in the direction of Earth and nourishes Himself from below : God, the transcendent personal, and the universe in evolution together forming no longer two antagonistic centres of attraction, but entering into a hierarchical union to raise up the human mass on the crest of a single tide. Such is the astounding transformation which the idea of a spiritual evolution of the universe entitles us to expect in logic and which is beginning in fact to operate on an increasing number of minds, free-thinkers as much as believers...

In spite of the wave of scepticism which seems to have swept away the hopes—too naive and materialistic, no doubt—on which the nineteenth century lived, faith in the future is by no means dead in our hearts. But more than that, it is this hope, deepened and purified, that seems destined to be our salvation. Not only, indeed, does it become clearer every day that the idea of a possible awakening of our consciousness to some sort of super-consciousness is well founded on scientific experience, and psychologically necessary if man is to retain his taste for action ; but further, this idea pushed to its logical conclusion seems the only one which can pave the way for the great event we await—the discovery of a synthesised act of adoration, in which a passionate desire to conquer the world, and a passionate desire to unite ourselves with God, will join hands and raise one another to the heights. So the vital act, specifically new, will correspond to a new terrestrial age.

(*Memorandum drawn up when Teilhard was unable to go to New York as he wished after 11 December 1940*)

\* With acknowledgments to *Letters from a Traveller, 1923-1955* (Fontana Books. London, 1967).

## THIS SATANIC URGE

“This throbbing of terror shaped to melody.”

—AESCHYLUS, *The Agamemnon*

Our Souls the sparks of an immaculate Sun—  
The heat of that self-same Heat—  
What dare-devils are these  
That from their azure heights  
They should fall upon this world of clay ?  
What inscrutable moth-urge  
Hurls them down to the burning Darkness of the earth ?

Is it the hell-instilled desire  
To be crowned with thorns  
Drives them mad and blinds them  
Of their virgin Light ?

Or is it the attraction of Light  
To a hidden iridescence at the core of dust  
Recklessly draws them here  
To win a meagre though matchless sheen ?

What rash bargain, then !—  
A stupendous waste ?...

Is not Transmutation of an earth  
Into miracles of flowers  
A thing worth striving for ?

Had they not taken the flesh-form  
Of a soul-maddening nerve-shattering Rapture,  
A Helen or a Cleopatra might have been  
Unseen airy stuff gliding through space  
Even as imperceptible vapour through the skyey vault.

Nay, not to me sweeter the unheard unexpressed melodies.



Had Bach not translated into violinconcertos  
His pain-enraptured Soul,  
There might have been music but without its subtle-rhythmic heart.

Only on the crest of grief has blossomed a Taj.

Indeed, this self-flung self-wrecking foolhardy Blindness  
To pluck the dust's enchantment  
Is a more thrilling though dangerous life  
Than  
The lone bright monotony of an eventless Sun.

'Tis this dare-devil Spirit of ours  
Breaks the dull delight of the upper sphere  
And blows into earth-shoots  
Epic-songs of a riotous multi-smear'd Joy ;

Else Life might have been  
Only a white swoon of Nothingness.

19 March 1967

BIBHAS JYOTI MUTSUDDI

## ACCORDING TO DJOJOBOJO

“AFTER a long period of subjection to a white race, the Javanese will be freed after a yellow race drives away the white race. Then Java will be ruled by a man graced by *śakti* (supernatural power). After twenty years this man will lose his *śakti* and then will come a time of madness in which Java will experience upheavals of such intensity that the population will be reduced to half its previous number, the Chinese will be beaten into a stupor and the white race will be reduced to a pair. After the time of madness, will emerge a new man with *śakti* and a *Ratn Adil* (prince of justice) whose rule will set the beginnings of a new era of peace, justice and prosperity for the people of Java.”

So runs the fourteenth-century prophecy of King Djojobojo, the Nostradamus of the Javanese. His predictions are known and believed by every man and woman in Java. It is thus hardly surprising that the events of the past twenty-five years should have been widely interpreted as the fulfilment of the prophecy of King Djojobojo. In 1942 a yellow race, the Japanese, did indeed drive out a white race, the Dutch, who had dominated Java for centuries. Sukarno ruled Java after the defeat of Japan, and whatever the faults of his later years, few would deny that to weld the disparate populations of the Indonesian archipelago into anything like a nation required exceptional powers. But the magic wore off and in September, 1965, twenty years and a few weeks after the defeat of Japan, an abortive Communist coup, brought on prematurely by a report of Sukarno's death, ended his dictatorship. Then followed a “time of madness” in which at least half a million people were slaughtered and in which Chinese political influence was ended, and the emergence of General Suharto and the Sultan of Djogjakarta as the new leaders of the nation. Suharto, a deeply religious man, owed his life on the night of the coup to the fact that he was away from his house engaged in meditation as instructed by his *guru*.

Not the least of the merits of Mr. Tarzie Vittachi's book<sup>1</sup> is that in telling his story he makes due allowance for the beliefs of its actors. “What is significant,” he says, “is not so much that the prophecy was proved, but that everyone who knew it believed that it would work out in just that way, and even felt that it was necessary to play his role to fulfil that destiny. The time of madness was therefore inevitable—and indeed necessary—according to this way of feeling and thinking, and the mass killing was not a matter for sentimentality and horror but for sympathetic and courageous acceptance.”

The downfall of Sukarno is indeed a most complex story and at the same time an enthralling and a pitiful one. Vittachi, born in Ceylon and for many years editor

<sup>1</sup> *The Fall of Sukarno*. 191 pp. André Deutsch. 30s.

of the *Ceylon Observer*, was forced into exile for outspoken criticism of the Bandaranaike Government after writing *Emergency '58*, his account of the race riots in Ceylon. He became Asian Director of the International Press Institute in Kuala Lumpur and from there developed close links with Indonesia which gave him access to Djakarta when all foreign correspondents were banned. He is thus well-qualified both psychologically and in other ways to elucidate Indonesian events. *The Fall of Sukarno* is a clear and careful piece of research which comes as close to the truth as is likely to be possible for some years to come, and it is bound to be widely read. The commendable speed at which it has been produced must excuse the misspellings of Javanese words which some will find irritating. An index, brief notes on the main actors and a short glossary might, however, be regarded as indispensable in view of the part played in the story by slogans and ephemeral movements with bewildering names.

The coup of September, 1965, was not of course the end of Sukarno's power. For years he had maintained his position by playing off the Army and the communists against each other; the unsuccessful coup forced him to give the task of restoring order to the Army, who used it to liquidate their communist enemies. But in theory he could then have declared the task accomplished and withdrawn the powers he had granted. Mr. Vittachi describes how the manoeuvres by which he tried to do this were thwarted first by students and finally by schoolchildren. Through it all, as Sukarno tried to talk his way back to power, his verbosity more and more irrelevant, Suharto seems strangely inactive, as if he believed that Sukarno must be allowed to ruin himself, that his fall must be seen to be his own unaided doing. In fact Suharto believed that "despite Sukarno's efforts to thwart destiny, power must desert him...despite himself the President was playing his part in the ineluctable development of destiny". Having handed over part of his powers to Suharto, it was Sukarno himself who brought the Sultan of Djogjakarta, widely identified as the *Ratn Adil*, into the Cabinet.

Sukarno has ceased to be President of Indonesia, even in name, since Mr. Vittachi concluded his book with the thought that as long as he is alive no one can write him off as a spent force. King Djojobojo and the *guru* might not agree with him.

(*With acknowledgments to the "Times Literary Supplement", May 11, 1967, p. 934.*)

# JIGNASU'S GURU

## A SHORT STORY

JIGNASU had been in the house for more than a decade, a blissful prisoner of his great master, Vidyadhar Pandit. The Panditji's name was known far and wide; he had become a legendary figure in that part of the country. Jignasu, charmed by the name, had come seeking for knowledge. Before starting his search of the Master he had had a dream :

It was a very beautiful big garden in a rainbow-land. He saw gods and goddesses; some were singing, some were dancing, some were playing and some were taking a round of the garden. Joy and laughter lighted up the garden. Taken in by the celestial beauty never before seen anywhere on earth, he stopped to drink of the delight. "But who knows," thought the child Jignasu, "would they permit me ? Better stay here and enjoy the vision standing behind a rock to avoid anybody finding me out." Accordingly he stood peeping from his hiding place.

After a few moments he felt a gentle touch on his right shoulder. He looked back in alarm and found himself face to face with a white-bearded Rishi, smiling.

"Come, my child, what are you doing here ?" said the Rishi in a voice of compassion.

"But, may I ?... Will they permit me ?..." asked Jignasu hesitatingly.

"Why not ? Come, let us go." So saying the Rishi took the hand of Jignasu and moved on.

The dream had made a lasting impression on the tiny soul of the child. When he came to Vidyadhar Pandit, he felt that the Rishi who had taken his hand to lead him in his vast compassion was the self-same master who stood before him. He prostrated himself at the feet of the master and surrendered his soul entirely.

He was 12 years old when he entered the house. Though he had been alone there for the last 10 years, he never felt he was lonely. A servant looked after his food and other needs.

All the hours of the day, nay, even the minutes and seconds, were his. He was glad at the immense wealth of time at his disposal. He shared this joy with the flowers and the trees and the birds in the garden. The breeze of the early morning would whisper into his ears the tidings of the golden dawn. At night he would lie on his back upon the terrace of the house and converse with the stars. At other times, he would take his Tambura and drown himself in the delightful sea of music. In the library he found his other heaven. But the heavenliest of heavens was the presence of his master, even though it was only for a few moments. All other heavens reflected the light of this supreme bliss.

Once, after meditation in the presence of his master, Jignasu, beaming with peace,

said, "My sweet Master, the more I think the more I am coming to the conclusion that the Rishi whom I saw in my dream is none else than yourself. Am I right?"

This brought a smile on the face of Vidyadhar. After a few minutes' serene silence he replied, "You will have to find that out for yourself. By the way, tell me, when are you going to give up this bad habit of thinking?"

Jignasu lowered his head and said, "Yes, Prabhu, I shall try. Sometimes, I feel I am quite unfit for the grace showered upon me..."

"No one is fit, my child! And there is none who deserves the grace. Have you not read the scriptures? Even Brahma committed blunders. Did he not? He was even afraid to approach Lord Narasimha. Only keep the fire burning. That is important."

Vidyadhar's eyes were shining with a nameless light. The light together with the gracious words thrilled the heart of Jignasu.

On some other occasion, he spoke to his master thus: "Our Shastras assert that the repetition of the name of Panchakanyas liberates us from sin. According to the stories of the Puranas apparently almost all the Kanyas are polluted. I took up the case of Ahalya for my probe. To my happy surprise a very beautiful truth shines out from behind this symbolic story.... That is why I feel it is often asserted that the Puranas are the interpretations of the Vedas and Upanishads for the common man."

"I am glad. I see you are slowly turning to the sight for guidance. This is good. The whole of infinity is before you to be discovered," said the Master.

Thus glided the glad days into months, and months into years, and the years into a rich decade. Jignasu thought of time. Though Vidyadhar Pandit had reduced to the utter minimum his personal presence, Jignasu never felt the gap.

One day when he was in the library he heard the words "Jai, Jai Kars" ringing in the air and the sound of music. His curiosity was roused. He opened the southern window for the first time since he had come into the house. He saw a great crowd in festive colours. The curiosity changed into temptation, and he decided to go out. He completely forgot the one condition imposed upon him by his master that he should not go out, and went out and joined the crowd. He asked someone what the occasion was. The man informed him: "We have a great Sabha. The Pandits from all over the country have come. There will be discussions and discourses on a variety of subjects. We are having a public function. Come, we can all go and attend the proceedings." This decided Jignasu. He went to attend the "Sabha". One by one the great famous Pandits spoke eloquently on subjects chosen by them. All were perfect in their own fields. Everyone established his own siddhanta. No one agreed with another and it seemed all were agreed to disagree with everyone.

However, Jignasu began to regret having come. Neither the speeches nor the air of the place pleased him. Then to his surprise he was invited by the presiding Maharaja to address the assembly. Perhaps the Maharaja's eyes could see the unique accomplishments of the young man. Jignasu hesitated, but was finally prevailed upon to avail himself of the rare opportunity. Willy-nilly, he went to the platform, recited

the Vedic mantras as an offering of prayers in a majestic musical voice. The audience saw in him the incarnate picture of the fire that is Mantra. An unknown peace and silence gripped the assembly. After the end of the prayer he began : "Brother Gods ! Since the earth began, we have been arguing. When will we stop this argument ? When will we know the will of the Lord in us ? When will we abolish the troublesome gates of birth and death ? We allow ourselves to be robbed of all our heavenly wealth. When we enter here, we are in a state of coma. We are so much overpowered by the perils of the path that we even forget our identity, let alone the wealth and work with which we started our journey...." He closed his eyes unexpectedly for a few seconds and then continued, "And what we recover after the life-long labour of our lost wealth is reduced, alas ! to this precarious argument.... Ah ! I see, my Gurudev bids me stop and I stop. Pranams to you all." Saying this, he abruptly closed his speech and returned to his seat. All were surprised at the eccentricity of the youth. But all knew that the Guru's command was imperative.

The next item of the programme was distribution of awards. Jignasu was called to receive his "Bahumanam". The Maharaja was very much charmed by the radiant personality of the youth. "How great must be the Guru of such a disciple !" The Raja thought, and asked him who his illustrious Guru was. Beaming with pride born of utter devotion, Jignasu replied, "My illustrious Guru is Sri Vidyadhar Pandit." The Maharaja, unable to believe what he heard, asked again, "Who did you say is your Guru ?" "Why, it is Sri Vidyadhar Pandit," replied the youth in an emphatic voice.

"Vidyadhar Pandit ?" exclaimed the Maharaja ! "Vidyadhar Pandit ? Vidyadhar Pandit ! " repeated several other stunned voices. "Is he not dead, Goverdhan Sarma ?" enquired eagerly the Maharaja of a Pandit.

"Yes, Maharaj, it is more than 12 years since," said Goverdhan Sarma.

"I am sure there is no other Pandit by the name with such erudition. He was almost superhuman in his achievements," said some other Pandit. The Maharaja's fear-filled eyes looked at Jignasu as though he were looking at a ghost of Vidyadhar Pandit.

"It is strange ! There must be some mistake somewhere. I have come here from his house just near here. I have been living with him for the last 10 years. The light that you see in me and for which I am being rewarded is but his gift to me. He is more alive than anyone of us." With these words Jignasu suddenly went out of the assembly and returned to his house, with bitter regrets in his heart for having broken the law laid down by the Master. "I will never again go out without the permission of my master," thought Jignasu.

When he entered the house, it presented a different look. He could not feel the sweet presence of his master. Tears flowed from his eyes. He prayed to his Master. How long he spent in prayers he did not know, when at last a soft touch on his shoulder woke him up. He saw his master and fell on his knees before him.

"I know, I know," said Vidyadhar with a splendid smile on his lips. "What has

happened had to happen. The time has come, my child ! and you should return home.”

“But, Prabhu !” pleaded Jignasu.

“Hear me,” came the voice of Vidyadhar. “What they said in the assembly is true enough. My desire to give the light to someone kept me bound to earth. By the help of the light I was able to keep a hold on earth and I began my search. You were chosen. Now I am absolutely free. Do not try to understand by your mind what I have told you. The time will come when you will understand everything. Now, return home, my child. The Lord is always with you.”

When Jignasu lowered his head to make Pranam, Vidyadhar Pandit was not there.

VENKATARANGA

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## FROM THE SANSKRIT

Even a moment's forgetfulness  
 Of the Lord's victorious Lotus Feet  
 Makes all discourse on scriptures  
 A voice in the wilderness,  
 The works of charity a show of vanity,  
 A pilgrim dip in the holy waters  
 A stupid bath of elephants.

VENKATARANGA

*(Translation from Mukunda Mala of Kulasekhara)*

# ESSAYS ON SAVITRI AND PARADISE LOST

## THE PROBLEMS AND THEIR SOLUTIONS

(Continued from the issue of August 15)

WE have seen the insufficiency of morality and religion and how far it failed Milton. There is another problem we must answer and evaluate properly its place : that is love and hate. Love and hate are psychological principles ; they call for philosophical interpretation of their existence and role. They have a moral implication in Milton and a spiritual bearing in Sri Aurobindo. We have to treat them separately in their turns, although they can equally be treated as co-existent units.

Love, as Sri Aurobindo conceives it, is a primal power of sacrifice and its puissance is immense ; it can perform marvels, its passage is swift and it pervades all the things of the universe from the most ethereal stars to the most crude stones. But, as manifest in the human person, it undergoes a deformation of its intrinsic principle and we have degradations such as lust, physical love, vitalistic love, egoistic love and finally hate in cruelty and sadistic, masochistic manifestations. In *Savitri* we have the spiritual aspect of love : the love of the soul for the soul, the love of the Divine for the human, and its power is enormous. Here we face no problems, for there are no deformations. In Milton we have two opposite powers encountering each other, creating differences or attempting to undo the heaven of love, the state of paradise. One is virulent, strong and a maskless power of destruction to which the other can hardly stand up as an equal and the result is the domination by hate and the fall of love. Great miseries ensue. Problems of existence, of happiness, or even of survival come to the forefront. In *Savitri* there is no direct opposition by hate ; but here it is the opposition between the Divine and ignorance. But there love triumphs whereas in Milton it fails miserably. Even the love of Christ cannot save man. One act washes overboard all tenderness from the dictatorial preceptor of the world. This is the tragedy in Milton. In *Paradise Lost* power evokes envy and, when power crushes this envy, a dire and ruthless hate is born. And love both human and divine are of lesser intensity because neither Christian theology nor Milton has a clear conception of the power of love. Milton conceives human love as (if we may use the term) passionless sexuality while the divine love is not love in this category but compassion. Christianity conceives human love to be chaste only if it is between wedded persons, and all else is lust. Thus human love both in Milton and Christian theology is linked with sex. This is a most pragmatic and outer and crude conception of love. In Sri Aurobindo's terminology such love is not love at all. But the West is a pragmatic race : it both fails to understand the occult implication, the deeper psychological bearing of love as a primal Divine factor and misreads its manifestations in the world.



But hate is a tangible power. Its mark of manifestation is striking by its violence as well as its destructiveness. The old Biblical religion is based on hate : the hate of other religions, the hate of other doctrines, the hate of riches one cannot attain to, the hate of the power and prosperity one's nation is deprived of, the hate of foreign domination the Chosen People had to bear and the hate of each other due to misunderstanding, ungenerous feelings and narrowness of sentiments. The God of the early Bible is a deity of hate. His laws proclaim this hate towards women, towards infidels, towards the wayward and all intemperance, be it adultery or a minor breach of conduct : all of which is punished with death. There is no place for forgiveness in the ancient Hebraic code. Even the Messiah could not escape the talons of this hate, so heinous and unforgiving is its character. Milton was impressed by the relentless nature of this religion and the war he waged was not a fight of love or of religion but that of fierce hatred against a class he did not love, against a sect which has nothing in common with and everything in opposition to his bent of being. Love he had hardly met with in his family life, and this added to the violence of his hatred. To him love remained a far ideal, an impossible dream which could never materialise. Now the problem is : how to reconcile love with this strong and maskless hate? How does Milton try to do it?

Because he has spoken so effectively of the dark elements, the purer one seems out of place. His attempt is to speak of Christ's love as an undertone, but his wrong emphasis spoils the issue. It would be an error to pronounce that he wanted to harp on hate due to this wrong emphasis. For, he had no direct experience of true Divine Love and his background was of hate; even his religion and religious background, as we have seen earlier, dwell on this element. "Without love, the hate of Satan would find no play. And without hate the love of God cannot be manifested." This, we suppose, was his inner thought. But what he managed to achieve, we have all seen. Hence in actual fact he cannot reconcile the issue, and there is no logical conclusion of the triumph of love in his work. In fact, neither does hate triumph in the real sense, nor is love the victor. There is an ambiguity of issues. This makes us draw different conclusions.

Is it perhaps because there is no issue in the affairs of human existence that Milton draws this ambiguous conclusion; or is he really not capable of solving the issue? Or is it perhaps that Christianity too has found no solution to it? Whatever the conclusion, the riddle remains unchanged and unanswered.

Hate manifests itself in three ways, by open aggression, by slow cunning destruction and, when it finds no outlet, it wears out by eating away its own vitals. Satan tries both the former methods. In one he is defeated outright. In the other he partially accomplishes his mission. God replies to hate with violence and in the second attempt curses mankind as well, by his reply to Satan's second endeavour. Is God's violence a result of hate? The Jewish tradition speaks of 'a tooth for a tooth and an eye for an eye' and hence hatred for hatred. In that case this Miltonic God is not above hate and He acts like man for his self-preservation. If He is not such

and does not act so, why did he not end Satan at the outset without giving him scope for further mischief? This only means that God held Satan to be His equal and hate arose only when an entity which was to be equal to God surpassed God or attempted to surpass him. Hate is an upward going or a parallel movement; it is never a downward stream. Hence we draw this conclusion. More so because God does everything to save heaven but almost nothing to save man.

Christ here represents love, the opposite of God's hate. He is the only one to come forward to save fallen man. How can we understand this fact that hate generated love? Psychologically love and hate are manifestations of the same power, rather the obverse and reverse aspects of the same psychological condition. Here one may interpose and say that the hate that God felt for revolted Lucifer was love in its reverse form. We can answer back that hate generates hate, violence gives birth to violence. What Satan felt was jealousy, and, when he manifested it in an open rebellion, God's love that was kept for his beloved Angel was suddenly turned to the gall of hate. Further, God's hate was aimed not as a passing whim of punishment but as a perennial torment in Hell. This surely could not be a sign of love, even in its widest, most far-fetched sense. Christ comes to save: for he foresees the impending doom. He is what God is not. God as he reveals himself to the Christians is His visage of anger, imperious aloofness. Christ as he reveals himself is His manifestation of love. Both are complements and opposite aspects of the one spiritual principle. It is thus we may try to bridge the gulf that exists in Christian theology.

There is a spiritual violence that ensues not from hate but from a deeper poise of the spirit. The dances of Kali and Siva are such. But the anger of Milton's God does not belong to this category, for this God is an ethical one and His scope does extend to the spiritual domain. Here all actions and reactions are linked with morality and conduct. One can mark that so long as Satan plotted in silence, God did not intervene; but when he manifested himself in action, God sent out His emissaries. That means this ethical power is superficial and acts with reference to conduct. But the spiritual power that acts sees the inner cause of Ignorance and, when it strikes, its stroke is invincible leaving no room for a renewed revolt. Hence we conclude the ethical origin of the Miltonic hate. Being superficial, ethical violence is not absolute in its potency and leaves room for further actions.

The love of Christ is a unique feature of Christianity which has not been fully exploited by Milton due to a failure to grasp the full implication of Divine Love. The failure comes of Christianity's close relationship with materialism and to the limitation of its vision to the cruder manifestations of love. It cannot see love as something effective and yet divine; something manifest and yet surpassing the limitations of the physical world. Therefore it regards Christ's love as something ethereal, divine and, having no earthly roots, an impossibility. Only by faith the Christian adheres to his love, for he knows that his love cannot save and, if it cannot save this single human existence, of what avail is his love? Being pragmatic, the Christian seeks a utilitarian motive in his love. Both these needs are not fulfilled.

Hence, because he cannot discard Christ as a religious principle, he concedes to him a negligible place. This is specially so in the Protestant faith where Mary as mother is not predominant and Christ emerges merely as a law-giver and not as a dispenser of love. Another point: the Puritans as a sect give little place to sentiments, the finer feelings, and for them love seems to occupy the circle of family, the wedded life and the hearth.

A critic may question: "What about Christian mysticism like Swedenborg's or that of the Essenes, the Talmud?" Here we do not include a few exceptional and illumined personalities, but the general mass of the Christian populace, of whom Milton can be taken as the representative. To such men the deeper teachings of Christ were lost. It is these men who give Christianity its power, its greatness or its baseness. These men regard love as a pastime. Here we differentiate between love and devotion. Devotion is an uprising flame while love is universal and has all aspects. It is this aspect the common Christian misses or else misconstrues. With the central aspect of Christ misread, the principal character of Christ too is lost.—while the Catholic gives great emphasis to Church as a body, the Protestant lays stress on the lawgiving aspect of Christ. Both these are essentially wrong. In one the Church is the saviour and in the other the personal freewill is the saving factor. But Christ is neither the Church nor the law, he manifests love in its purest form. Redemption through love was his message. The body of theological verbiage that grew around this central core of the teaching turned the whole aspect of Christ's character, nature and mission. Love was translated, at the best, into piety, service, and missionary work. But even here was not true love. Love is akin to self-sacrifice, it is the psychological key to the mystery of spiritual existence. Christ, by giving himself body and soul for the people he came to save, proclaimed this message. Those who came after him gave themselves not for love but for a moral cause, an ethical principle which, as martyrs, they upheld unto death. Love came with Christ and disappeared with his body's end.

But, when twisted by the cruder philosophy of the common Hebraic people, his doctrine took another significance than that which he had intended to propound. And curiously very few attempt to understand or grasp the mystic significance of his original doctrine: they go instead to his apostles, his commentators and those who formulated the Christian faith after him. Hence Love remains a sealed chapter, specially to the Puritans.

*(To be continued)*

ROMEN

## **“EDUCATION FOR ONE WORLD”**

**STATEMENT OF THE SEMINAR HELD BY WORLD UNION AT  
PONDICHERRY UNDER THE CHAIRMANSHIP OF DR. C. D.  
DESHMUKH FROM THE 12TH TO THE 16TH AUGUST 1967**

### **CONCLUSIONS**

#### *General :*

A major and radical effort for the education for One World is called for. The present evolutionary crisis of human civilisation demands it. The needs of the Future that have to be met in order to fulfil the destiny of Man on this planet demand it still more imperatively. U Thant, Secretary General of the U.N.O., has aptly remarked :

‘Now men are henceforth in a position, if united, to foresee and to a certain extent determine the future of human development. This is, however, possible only if we stop being afraid of one another, harrying one another and if, together, we accept, welcome and prepare the changes that have inevitably to take place. If that means a change of human nature, well, it is high time to work at it’ (*Journal la Suisse*, Genève, 10.4.1967).

Our experience of the U.N.O. and its agencies shows that they work effectively in the areas in which national vested interests are not involved. Even if statesmen and politicians are to rise above political considerations, they will have to draw their support from the general will of the people. It is only when the people of the world come to realise the need for world unity that they will impel their political leaders to transcend the considerations that perpetuate divisions among mankind.

This means we are back at the individual as the pivot of all evolutionary progress. The general will can be given the right direction only through the education of individuals. That is why World Union emphasises the transformation of the individual instead of attempting feverishly to reform international institutions.

The ‘Prospective’ movement in France has also set its gaze steadily towards the Future and believes that a kind of mutation of ideas which govern the world is bound to come about and that this mutation is of the same order of magnitude as a biological mutation. Recent researches in extrasensory perception and allied phenomena have pointed towards the fact that there are subtler forces working in the universe than what we are ordinarily aware of. It would seem that humanism with its usual implications cannot help to bring about the change in human nature which alone can save mankind from annihilation.

#### *Philosophy of Education for One World :*

A new vision and philosophy of life and a resultant new aim of education are then the imperative needs. It is only a Humanism based on Spirit that can deal effectively with the vital instincts and impulses of man and provide a lasting solution to the problems of human life.

Admirable as they are, the recent efforts initiated by UNESCO towards education for international understanding cannot be expected to lead to a fundamental and revolutionary change in the general approach to education that would aim at the transformation of Man.

If world unity is to be realised, it will be only as a result of the fulfilment of the inmost truth of Man. It is only because the individual can attain to his fullest development by becoming universal that the ideal of the Universal Man becomes practicable and relevant to education. Man, from the point of view of Yoga, is a soul, a psychic being, and not the ego or the body-life-mind complex. And the truth of the soul is a true individuality that recognises a single soul in humanity of which each man and each people is a soul-form or manifestation.

*Education for the Whole Man :*

To bring forth the essential universality secret in the depths of the soul of the individual would seem to be the obvious object of education for One World.

The logic of the recent educational methodology itself points to the need for a revolution in education towards the above aim. The modern educationist is indeed in search of the soul of the child. The idea of the individual differentiation, the stress on multiple methods of teaching for different categories of students, the recognition of the phenomenon of genius, the insistence on the development of an integrated personality and the claim for the freedom of the child to be educated in the manner in which it chooses to be educated—all these have created a new atmosphere which augurs well for the future.

Religion can hardly be expected to fulfil this aim. While it encourages an inner aspiration towards what is regarded as the highest, religion very largely confines itself to creed, dogma, belief and rituals. The universal spirit in Man grows much more rapidly and surely when the conditions of freedom of thought and of dispassionate inquiry and experience are satisfied.

It must also be observed that the inner spirit of man does not grow in isolation from the development of the outer faculties and powers of consciousness. Education has therefore to be a process with two intertwining operations : it must be the development of the faculties and powers of the outer being pressing towards the inner truths culminating in the awakening of the secret soul and of the essential universality that is deep in the individual ; it must be at the same time the pressure of the soul and essential universality in the individual for the growth under their secret guidance of the outer faculties and powers of the being. The perfection of body, life and mind, their governance and control and suffusion by the soul whose breath is universality—such would seem to be the substance of integral education, the education of the whole man.

*Integration of Humanities and the Sciences :*

The education for One World should mean a synthesis of the contributions of

the East and the West. There should also be a true synthesis of Humanities and the Sciences.

The yawning gulf between what have been called the 'two cultures' has received great attention in recent years. A movement for general education has spread from the United States to quite a few other countries. But it is doubtful whether the unity of all knowledge which is essential for integral education can be secured in this way. This would seem to be possible only when all other modes open to the attainment of knowledge are duly subordinated to one supreme activity, the way of 'Knowledge by Identity,' or knowledge received through intuitive perception or love. Every object in creation has about it a complexity which itself makes the object a symbol of the unity of knowledge. Several intellectual disciplines meet and intermingle in man's life from moment to moment. Knowledge has been divided and sub-divided into Languages, the Fine Arts, Philosophy, Social Sciences, Earth Sciences, Life Sciences, Technical and Professional Disciplines, etc. It is broadly assumed that the Fine Arts stand for Beauty, the Sciences for Truth, and Professional Courses for executive and productive ability—Power. But one has to realise that the study of each academic subject has to promote certain intellectual abilities, feelings and tastes, intuitive perceptions and manipulative or productive skills. Love or intuitive perceptions, truth or the reasoning processes of deduction and induction and analysis and synthesis, beauty or the refinement of emotions and tastes, and power or the creativity which produces a new thing of value—these are the aspects of human personality which every academic subject has to stimulate and cultivate. It may be an epic poem, a temple, an IBM machine, a space rocket or the end-product of any other discipline. It is bound to be a thing of value unless passion or prejudice distorts the vision and obscures love. It may be that the Fine Arts mainly develop and refine tastes and feelings and the Sciences the reasoning faculties. But the fact remains that on the level of love or intuition men of all disciplines meet. Every subject has to be taught so as to bring out its manifold potentialities. The particular facts and processes involved in the teaching of each subject may be different but teachers and students have to be made aware of this common background of unity against which it has to be studied.

*Practical Suggestions concerning the Role of Parents and Teachers, Text Books, etc.*

The education for One World asks for a new experimentation and research in Education. Fortunately, however, this experimentation and research are being carried out at some rare but important institutions, and some of the guide lines that we can gather from the results achieved so far may be noted. :

It is necessary to insist upon the fact that the inner discovery and the direct experience of the universal spirit must be taken as a sovereign and central occupation, governing and permeating every aspect of educational life and activities.

It would not do merely to prescribe a few graded books on the universality of man or on international subjects and to allot a certain fixed quantum of hours to

the study of these books. The education for one world must be a living process, and must proceed by illumination and by the kindling of lights by lights.

This would mean the dynamic presence of living examples, the influence of teachers who in their own consciousness comprehend and live the unity of knowledge, synthesis of cultures and oneness of mankind.

The education for One World must start from the earliest moments of childhood. It may be noted that a good many children are under the influence of their inner soul and an innocent sense of universality ; they have the fresh eyes looking at the world with curiosity, happily devoid of division of colour, nationality, religion or race. They have a spontaneous turning to love, truth, beauty, knowledge, and a power that is not tyrannical. The recognition of these elements by parents and teachers and their nourishment would form a most solid foundation for any future growth towards universality.

The role of the parent or of the teacher is to put the child on the right road to his own perfection and to encourage him to follow it, watching, suggesting, helping but not imposing or interfering. The best method of suggestion is by personal example, daily converse, and the books read from day to day.

These books should contain, for the younger student, the lofty examples of the past given, not as moral lessons, but as things of supreme human interest and, for the elder student, the great thoughts of great souls, the passages of literature which set fire to the highest emotions and prompt the highest ideals and aspirations, the records of history and biography which exemplify the living of these great thoughts, noble emotions and aspiring ideals.

There are golden universal reaches of our consciousness, and from there and from the reaches intermediate between them and our ordinary mental consciousness have descended throughout history forces and forms which have become embodied in literature, philosophy, science, in music, dance, art, architecture, sculpture, in great and heroic deeds, and all that is wonderful and precious in the different organised or as-yet unorganised aspects of life. To put the students in contact with these forces and forms, Eastern or Western, ancient or modern, would be to provide them with the air and atmosphere in which they can breathe an aspiration to reach again those peaks of consciousness and and to create still newer forms which would bring the golden day nearer for humanity.

Opportunities should be given to students, as far as possible, of embodying in action the deep and noble impulses which rise within them.

The undesirable impulses and habits should not be treated harshly. The child should not be scolded. Particularly, care should be taken not to rebuke the child for a fault which one commits oneself. Children are very keen and clear-sighted observers. They soon find out the educator's weakness and note it without pity.

The child should be encouraged to think of wrong impulses not as sins or offences, but as symptoms of a curable disease which can be altered by a steady and sustained effort of the will, falsehood being rejected and replaced by truth, fear by

courage, selfishness by sacrifice and renunciation, malice by love. Great care should be taken that unformed virtues are not rejected as faults. The wildness and recklessness of many young natures are only overflowings of excessive strength, greatness and nobility. They should be purified, not discouraged.

The teacher should ensure that the child gradually begins to be aware of the psychological centre of his being, the centre of true and deep integration and of the highest truth of our existence. With this growing awareness, the child should be taught to concentrate on this presence and make it more and more a living fact. He should be taught that whenever there is an inner uneasiness, he should not pass it aside and try to forget it, but should attend to it, and try to find out by an inner observation the cause of uneasiness so that it may be removed by inner and outer methods.

It should be emphasised that if one has a sincere aspiration, a persistent and dynamic will, one is sure to meet—in one way or another, externally by study and instruction, internally by concentration, revelation and experience—the help one needs to reach the goal. Only one thing is absolutely indispensable : the will to discover and to realise. This discovery and realisation should be the primary occupation of the being, 'the pearl of great price' that one should acquire at any cost.

More than books and study on the class bench, it is the experience of the international atmosphere that promotes education for One World. This international atmosphere should be achieved in such a way that the different cultures of the world are accessible to all, not merely intellectually in ideas, theories, principles and languages, but also vitally in habits, customs, in art under all forms such as painting, sculpture, music, architecture, decorative arts and crafts and physically through dress, games, sports, industries, food and even reconstruction of natural scenery. The ideal is that every nation with its distinctive culture should have a contribution of its own to make so that it would find a practical and concrete interest in cultural synthesis and collaborate in this work.

At the higher levels of education, the student should be enabled not only to think widely and universally but also to live widely and universally. This alone would ensure a future humanity that would have the privilege of enjoying perpetual indivisible human unity.

#### A RESOLUTION ON *AUROVILLE*

It is gratifying that the aims of the education for One World are on the way to being given a practical shape by the formation and establishment of the International University Town of Auroville, about 3 miles from Pondicherry (South India). This Seminar of World Union welcomes the aims and ideals of Auroville which were presented in some of the expositions made on this subject during the sessions of the Seminar. This Seminar further invites all lovers of world unity and educationists who dream of a new Future Education to support the project of Auroville, which will also develop a design of integrated living in the world.



## BEATNIKS

It took my breath away when I read in the papers that a 'Himalayan Yogi' has called the Beatles the great practical philosophers of the twentieth century. I only hope he did not mean what he said and that was only his way of encouraging the youngsters to take interest in matters spiritual. The Beatles are, as is well known, the four young men of Britain who have their own ideas of what man and society should be and are blazing a new bizarre trail across the youth of the nations. It appears they attended a seminar held by the yogi in England and that provided the occasion for the hyperbole.

The Beatles are a typical symptom of the disease that is infecting the youth of today in most parts of the world ; the details may vary but fundamentally the nature and the direction of the phenomeon are the same. We are told that the young men of the present age are in revolt against an old effete civilisation and want to break new ground. They are up against everything that smacks of the old, including its graces, and go all out to deliberately deny those values in their own person. They are known by various names, Beatle-types, Beatniks, Red Guards and so on. They give up their families and settled ways of life and are always on the move ; they discard the usual, conventional clothes and dress themselves in most outlandish ways ; even their personal appearance is unedifying. And they delight in it.

To a dispassionate observer the whole movement cannot fail to strike as something retrograde, backswinging. Standards and values established by centuries of civilisation in the sphere of art, culture, polity, etc. are sought to be wiped out. Any genuine movement that hopes to build the future must perforce assimilate the best of the past and proceed further to make fresh gains. But the youth movements of the type we speak of, seek to destroy without any worthy substitutes in their hands. They are more or less vandals with mock heroics of the vulgar type.

The whole movement, we fear, is a destructive wave deriving inspiration from a vital, a lower vital consciousness. The ugly features that characterise the phenomenon, the restlessness and mass hysteria these men generate wherever they move into action, leave no doubt about it. It is not some juvenile movement that can be allowed to run itself out. If allowed to grow, it will swallow up the rising generations in a flood of negative and *paisāchic* turmoil.

Of late we have been getting a number of these specimens from different countries. They are clad in all sorts of combinations of apparel ; they bear no luggage ; they let grow their hair and beards in an unkempt manner ; they carry an air wholly unhygienic—physically and mentally. Only last week there was a group from Europe, clad in garish lungis, twigs of leaves in the ear, etc. At their request we extended our hospitality to them only to find that they were not above thieving, drunkenness, violence and every undesirable manifestation of the lower nature. It was a job to get

rid of them and there was a good deal of unpleasantness in the process. When I spoke to the Mother about them and their movement, she asked me what is their motive. She heard and then wrote a message to them in French, which may be rendered:

To break away from the old traditions and not to obey the old rules is good—but on condition that one discovers in oneself a higher and a truer consciousness which manifests harmony, peace, beauty and a superior order, vast and progressive.

26-8-67

M. P. PANDIT

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## ON THE TIDES OF TIME A CAUSERIE ON EVENTS AND OCCASIONS

### A BLANK BOOK ON SALE

It was the Duke of Gloucester who voiced this sentiment : "Another damned thick, square book ! Always scribble, scribble, scribble ! Eh ! Mr. Gibbon ?" (*Note to Boswell's Johnson*). And a Nobleman in Shaw's *Saint Joan* says : "Now this is what I call workmanship. There is nothing on earth more exquisite than a bonny book, with well-placed columns of rich black writing in beautiful borders, and illuminated pictures cunningly inset. But nowadays, instead of looking at books, people read them. A book might as well be one of those orders for bacon and bran that you are scribbling."

And at last, no more scribble ! A book, all blank, is on sale, with "blank verse, and blanker prose" (to quote Byron) in their extreme literal sense.<sup>1</sup> But this book's blankness is even with a difference—its pages are neatly adorned with the marks of punctuation. For some time, clear symptoms of mutiny have been observed in the ranks of punctuation—the militia of the domain of words. Gentle critics have viewed them as the cases of *private punctuation*. Now the punctuations have a hundred-paged book under their hold. Words were already experiencing unpredictable treatment in poetry with pitiable fractures inflicted on them as in the *unique typography* of poet e. e. cummings, where, for example, pairs of bracketed alphabets, all extra, would be twice inserted in as common a word as *clinging*, and finally the last two letters, *ng*, would form not only a separate line, but also a separate paragraph. Now the disintegration in word is culminated in a total liquidation of the same.

Certainly, it is irrelevant to deal with a renowned poet like Cummings side by side with the "author" of the *blank book*. Needless to say, it is nothing literary which connects them ; but it is the *absurd*. (Connotation of *The Absurd* in Sartre may be dependent on an experience of a philosophical nature, such as "we are in a senseless world, of which we ceaselessly and inevitably try to make sense." But most of those who have turned *absurdist*s today take only license under the term ; we are dealing with them. ) A deep sense of disintegration might inspire a poet to innovate an unusual construction, which, according to the poet's supposition, would air disintegration with the very disintegrating structure of the poem. And since, according to them, it is absurd to indulge in dialectics, morals, aesthetics, and so on, standing

<sup>1</sup> A few months ago, a book entitled *Nobel Prize* was on sale in Stockholm. All the hundred pages of the book were blank, though marks of punctuation were generously strewn all through.

on a platform which is fast disintegrating, *absurdness* becomes the truth of the moment, and what can be termed *Absurdism*, tends to become a cult.

Then follows the crisis ; the boundary between the genuine *absurd* (which certainly may be a piece of art) and the bluff becomes lost in mist, at least for the time being. So far as people in general are concerned, it becomes even too late for a Picasso to confess : "The people no longer seek consolation or inspiration in art. But the refined people, the rich, the idlers seek the new, the extraordinary, the original, the extravagant, the scandalous. And myself, from the epoch of Cubism, contented these people with all the many bizarre things that have come into my head. And the less they understood it, the more they admired it....But when I am alone with myself, I have not the courage to consider myself as an artist in the great sense of the word as in the days of Giotto, Titian, Rembrandt and Goya. I am only a public entertainer who has understood his time."

The question is : Can an artist really have faith in the so-called *absurd* ? Can he derive a creative stimulus from his faith—if at all it is a faith—that all is *absurd* ? We have seen Dadaism and Surrealism, the fore-runners of the anarchic activities which accompany today's *Absurdism* (and the surrealists' awful proverbs—"Elephants are contagious" or "Beat your mother while she is young", or even that ghastliest violence that was ever done to sense and conscience, *i.e.*, adding a pair of moustaches to Mona Lisa). They have failed to arouse any reverential awe. Those of the poets and painters belonging to these schools, who have found a lasting place in the libraries and the galleries, have only survived their creed, as Picasso has. Indeed, what they professed and fought about, almost form an extensive blank space against which their creative moments twinkle like stars.

A sense of futility or a feeling of revolt concerning many institutions, many codes of conduct of an orthodox world, is no doubt a reality of experience in many. Much must appear *absurd*—much of the surface—so that truths lying deeper could be pursued. What would be absurd is a deliberate glorification of the *absurd*.

While recognising absurdness in the prolongation of the decadent values, writers who are to reflect their age truly must reflect the inner urge of their time to discover new values. There are such worthies among the rebels of various kinds and they should not be, by mistake, counted with the "author" of the *blank book*.

In the meanwhile, however, a blank book may carry some significance, at a different level though, to realise which we must reflect on :

And even I can remember  
A day when the historians left blanks in their writing  
I mean for things they didn't know.

(Ezra Pound : *Canto*, XIII)

## ILYA EHRENBURG

“A great writer and a great reactionary. We are not publishing him because he is a bad influence on youth. But, a great writer !”

This statement was made by Stalin to Milovan Djilas of Yugoslavia in regard to Dostoevsky, and this sufficiently indicates the state of affairs in the domain of literature of that vast land—one-sixth of the world—under Stalin.

But matters are different today. Even, on the 1st of the current month, Russia's newspaper for young people *Komsomolskaya Pravda* published a letter written by one of its readers Miss A. Zyzyeva, pleading for religious education in the country's schools.

Behind such happy developments—which include the publication of a book such as *Not By Bread Alone* (the story of an individual's bold fight against the massive State bureaucracy) and the voice of Evtushenko loudly critical of the present time :

Posterity will remember  
And will burn with shame  
Remembering these strange days  
When common honesty was called courage...

there will ever live the memory of Ilya Ehrenburg who died on the 31st of August. As is well-known, it was his novel *The Thaw* (1954) that signalled the dawn of a new era. Thus, against the background of contemporary Russian history and her literature, the significance of Ehrenburg is almost symbolic.

Ilya Gregorievitch Ehrenburg, though known today as one of the foremost masters of Russian fiction and as a dynamic interpreter of the literary theories of the ruling party, had started his literary career as a poet and his political career as an anti-bolshevik. These however only help us to appreciate the variety of experiences this Grand Old Man of Russian Literature—as he was lately known—had gathered.

Ehrenburg, like Gorky, Sholokov and Pasternak, is among the few who have truly inherited something of the Great Russian Tradition of Gogol, Pushkin, Dostoevsky, Turgenev, Tolstoy and Bunin. One can realise that there was no design of sarcasm—but a touch of mystic vision—a true heritage of his country's literary past—when he wrote after a tour of India in 1955 : “Everything that in Europe would be a crying contradiction seems natural, in the Indian setting. This country is living simultaneously in the past, the present and the future. If you fail to understand this you will find it impossible to understand either the Five-Year Plans, or the religious processions, or the thoughts and aspirations of the people, or Rabindranath Tagore who spoke about his faith in the Upanishads and at the same time saluted the first socialist state of the world.”

During the Second World War Ehrenburg was a reporter in France and he travelled through the Balkans. His despatches used to infuse optimism into millions of his countrymen. He concludes his War Journal thus : "I was travelling eastward. We had left before dawn, and the December sun was in no hurry to rise. It was cold and unpleasant, and through the thick mist I felt rather than saw the ruins of a town. Finally the red disk of the sun pushed through the fog and the day broke. Nearby was a barracks building, and children were playing on their way to school. Even though the barracks was miserable and the children ill dressed, they were gaily playing those childhood games that are everywhere the same. Ahead of me stretched a road damaged by the war, but somehow it seemed different—like a pathway to life. These children will see the New Europe."

MANOJ DAS

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# *Students' Section*

## THE NEW AGE ASSOCIATION

### ELEVENTH SEMINAR

30TH APRIL 1967

#### WHAT IS THE NEED OF THE HOUR?

##### I

THE hour is unique because it is an hour of God, when "the breath of the Lord is abroad upon the waters of our being."<sup>1</sup> All that has been promised to man through the ages is now ready to be accomplished. It is a moment when the Divine Grace has come embodied on earth to bridge the gap between man and God, to kindle the Fire in the closed heart of things.

But such a transfiguration does not come of itself. Man too must collaborate, must want the New Light so that it may change his present life. And as the pressure from above grows, many get frightened and turn to anything whatsoever to get out of it. In the Mother's own words : "Lorsque le Seigneur s'approche le plus près des hommes pour établir un rapport conscient avec eux, dans leur folie, c'est à ce moment-la qu'ils font les plus grosses bêtises. C'est vrai, c'est tout à fait vrai, c'est au moment où tout se tait pour que l'homme devienne conscient de son Origine, que, dans sa folie, pour se distraire, l'homme conçoit ou exécute les pires stupidités."<sup>2</sup> ("When ..the Lord approaches most closely to men, to establish a conscious relation with them, it is then that in their folly they commit the grossest stupidities. This is true, altogether true, it is at the moment when all is silenced in order that man may become conscious of his Origin that he, in his folly, in order to distract himself, conceives or carries out the worst stupidities.")

The need of the hour, then, is receptivity, as complete as possible, in all the parts of the being, in all the activities of life. The way to attain this receptivity is through aspiration, peace and purity—

aspiration for the higher Light to manifest,  
peace which prepares the ground for its coming, and  
purity which opens all the parts of the being to  
the sole influence of the Divine.

AMITA

<sup>1</sup> Sri Aurobindo, *The Hour of God*, p. 3.

<sup>2</sup> *Bulletin of Sri Aurobindo International Centre of Education*, April 1965, p. 52.

## II

In ringing prophetic tones Sri Krishna declared: "Whenever there is the fading of the Dharma and the uprising of unrighteousness, then I loose myself forth into birth."<sup>1</sup> This in short is the condition of our world at present. The unrighteousness and Adharma that have constantly been ruling our earth have at present gained their full strength. They are the tyrant rulers of our modern life. In their oppressive rule we find that the life of humanity is tormented by mounting tensions. The fever and fret of the world have exceeded all limits and life seems to be choked with monstrous mechanisms.

If we look behind the apparent surface of things we shall see that these shocking conditions of the world are due to an unswerving everywhere of stupendous forces which are so baffling and intractable that the human mind, even with its best capacity and wisdom, feels more and more incapable of controlling them. The root-cause of these unprecedented conditions of the world lies in the inner nature of man himself. This inner malady is the result of a one-sided and unbalanced development of human life. Man has mastered the forces of the material world. He has sailed across the seas, scanned the skies and delved deep into the secretcies of nature but he has not yet peeped into his true inner being. It is this deficiency in his life that is the root-cause of all the abnormality, tension and conflict that are increasingly felt in the external spheres of politics, economics, morals, etc.

We also feel this deficiency in our own daily life. Often we come across so many inexplicable and complicated problems that we feel we are only playthings of nature. We fall victims to yet unknown diseases, we meet with accidents—we are helpless puppets of nature forces. This sense of helplessness awakens us to the need for an intervention of a higher force—a force that can radically change our inner consciousness and render us free from our human bondage.

This awakening to the need of a radical change in the inner consciousness of the individual and of humanity is the primary demand of the hour. This radical change cannot be brought about, as some of the moderners think, by any amount of moral effort or religious improvement but only by the intervention of a new Truth and a new Power. Messiahs and prophets in the past gave us a hierarchy of truths which have assumed the form of so many religions and cults. But these truths and half-truths do not have the power to change human nature, much less transform it. As Sri Aurobindo maintains, it is the Supramental Truth that alone has the power to transform human nature into divine nature. This Supreme Power, fortunately, has been brought down upon earth by Sri Aurobindo and the Mother. This, then, is the Power that alone can answer to the present need of the individual and humanity. It alone can stem the rising tide of the violent and anarchic forces which threaten to engulf human civilization.

It is true that this higher spiritual Power, the Supramental Force, is pouring

<sup>1</sup> *The Gita*, Ch. IV, Verse 7.



upon us in this Hour of God. But all depends upon our choice to collaborate or not, with this Force in its manifestation. As the Mother says, "...it is left to men to decide if they will collaborate for this change or it will have to be enforced upon them by the power of crashing circumstances." And, if we choose the Truth, we help the earth to become the "Spirit's manifest home". As Sri Aurobindo says, this will eventually bring superman to

...reign as king of life,  
 Make earth almost the mate and peer of heaven  
 And lead towards God and truth man's ignorant heart  
 And lift towards godhead his mortality."<sup>1</sup>

In this Hour of God a little effort for a higher life is sure to bring great results, for, this Hour is pregnant with Divine Grace and Force. Let us therefore give up ourselves entirely into the hands of the Divine and open wholly to the descending Force. It is only then that

A divine force shall flow through tissue and cell  
 And take the charge of breath and speech and act  
 And all the thoughts shall be a glow of suns  
 And every feeling a celestial thrill.<sup>2</sup>

We may not be able to attain these wonderful glories entirely in one life but we shall have the joy and pride of becoming "the voices of the vanguard, the torch-lights of the pioneers."<sup>3</sup> We shall be the few to be transformed into 'pure gold' and the ones who will "manifest Force without violence, heroism without destruction and courage without catastrophe."<sup>4</sup> And, we shall become the pivots around which the world will wheel into new spiritual destinies.

This, then, is our luminous future. Let us therefore arise to the occasion and pray to the Mother :

"Make of us the hero warriors we aspire to become. May we fight successfully the great battle of the future that is to be born, against the past that seeks to endure, so that the new things may manifest and we be ready to receive them."<sup>5</sup>

ANANDA REDDY

<sup>1</sup> *Savitri*, Book XI., Canto One, p. 793.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 797.

<sup>3</sup> Sri Aurobindo, *The Renaissance in India*, p.2

<sup>4</sup> The Mother, *Bulletin of Physical Education.*, April 1957.

<sup>5</sup> "Students' Prayer" given by the Mother.

## A SEMINAR ON SRI AUROBINDO AT SAN FRANCISCO ASHRAM

A SIX-DAY seminar on Sri Aurobindo, Existentialism and Zen Buddhism was held at San Francisco Ashram, 2650 Fulton Street, San Francisco, August 12-17, 1967.

The seminar was organized by Dr Haridas Chaudhuri, President, Cultural Integration Fellowship and Professor, American Academy of Asian Studies, San Francisco. Dr. Chaudhuri was formerly head of the department of philosophy, Krishnagar Government College, West Bengal. He went to the United States in March, 1951 on the nomination of Sri Aurobindo and at the invitation of the American Academy of Asian Studies. Mr. Somnath Dhar, Consulate General of India, San Francisco, rendered all help and co-operation in organizing the seminar.

This seminar centred round the celebration of Sri Aurobindo's birthday on August 15. Participating in the seminar were, among others, the following distinguished scholars :

Dr. Y. D. Ahuja, visiting Professor from Delhi University.

Dr. A. K. Sarkar, Professor of Philosophy, California State College, Hayward.

Dr. E. N. Landrum, President, American Academy of Asian Studies.

Dr. Dryden L. Phelps, Christian Theologian and Shakespeare critic.

Rev. Obadiah Harris, Minister, Temple of Truth, Phoenix, Arizona.

The proceedings of the seminar were guided by the concept of integral truth-vision in Sri Aurobindo's teachings. It was shown how Zen Buddhism and Vedanta, Existentialism and Essentialism, etc. are capable of being harmoniously reconciled in the light of integral philosophy.

The seminar winded up with a dinner party on Thursday, August 17 at 6.30 p.m. The dinner was followed by a program of music, dance and drama. A dramatic episode from Sri Aurobindo's great epic *Savitri* was presented. Playing active roles in this program were : Jean Bazemore, drama teacher at the University of California, Berkeley; Ruth Feiring, School teacher; Dr. James Plaugher, College professor; David Krause, College student; Shipra Chaudhuri, College student; and Linda McConnell, College student.

On Sri Aurobindo's birthday Ashram diplomas were awarded to three scholars for their research work in Indian philosophy and Sri Aurobindo. The diploma recipients are : Mr. Gobind Behari Lal, Pulitzer Prize winner and science writer, San Francisco Examiner; Dr. James Plaugher, former lecturer, San Jose State College; and Mr. Samuel Lewis, world traveller and scholar of Eastern philosophy.

The seminar was very successful.

## WE AND OUR MEDICAL CONFERENCES\*

IN His heavenly Sauce-pan,  
Now God was 'preparing' Man.

But ere it was half-a-fry,  
There rose a howl and cry  
To fill Heaven with a scream,  
"The Earth awaits us; it's no fuss  
Waiting your Perfection-Dream".

"Now that you have a voice,"  
Said God, "a choice is given to thee,  
Whether you shall live 'somehow'  
Or live eternally free !"

"Of course the second," was man's demand  
While peeping over the pan's brim  
Towards Earth's rich fund :  
"For that, much cooking is yet to do, my friend,"  
Murmured God. "Anyway, go, I shall see to that end "

Thus half prepared bodies were given release.  
'Suffering, Death and Disease',  
Earth's three cooking spices,  
Were soon to follow  
To fill up the 'hollow'  
Left by our human vices  
In the body-cells, until they groan,  
And long for that promised life unknown.

Man ran up again  
And knocked at Heaven's gate,  
"We hate this nonsense  
You have given to our fate !"

"The choice is your own :  
Before completing the roast,

\* Written for the Souvenir of the State Medical Conference, Bihar, 1966.

Of a diseaseless, deathless body,  
How could you boast ?”

“But how can we stand  
All this oppression grand ?  
Let’s be happy with things as they are,  
Off with your perversions from another star !”

“So to live ‘somehow’  
Is the boon given to you now;  
Herbs and drugs and medical men  
From now on shall fill your den.”

Even since then, with this fate  
Man is living, living, at any rate.

Yet the All-Perfectionist’s initial touch  
Has given him a soul,  
That carries in it the Alchemist’s Goal.

To feel the Incompleteness, the much  
That still remains : never to rest  
Until the All-Perfectionist’s finishing touch—  
This is perhaps our Conferences’ hidden Quest.

DR. AJOY MITRA

## BASIC OUTLINES OF TELEVISION

Impure, sadistic, with grimacing mouths,  
Grey foul inventions gruesome and macabre,  
Came televised from the gulfs of Night.

Sri Aurobindo, *Savitri*, Book 2, Canto 7, p. 241 (Int. Univ. Centre Col. Vol.II)

*Jagataḥ Pitarau Vande Pārvatī-Parameśvarau.*

SALUTATION to the Parvati-Parameswar of the modern techno-spiritual age—the twin prophets of Supermind who, like Siva-Kali or the Space-Time continuum, are actually two-in-one and one-in-two.

In this our techno-spiritual age technically T.V. stands for television and spiritually it stands for TOTAL VICTORY of the Divine over the anti-Divine. While television is rather old, Total Victory is still to be achieved.

I have started this discussion with a quotation from Sri Aurobindo's epic poem *Savitri* where he has used the word "television"—not because I thought it had anything to do with the discussion but because this technical term—like many other similar ones—has received his blessings by having the good fortune to be written by his mighty pen and thus getting a permanent place of honour in his immortal cosmology.

That many scientific terms (*e.g.*, *proton*<sup>1</sup>, *photon*<sup>2</sup>, *wave-particle*<sup>3</sup>, *quantum*<sup>4</sup>, etc. etc.) have received their due places of honour in *Savitri* is vastly significant. *Savitri* is the epic poem of Life engaged in Cosmic Flight and all life is itself an epic poem. *Savitri* proclaims the Descent of a mighty Saviour-Power (the Supermind or *Rita-Chit*) upon earth, that shall bring about a radical transformation of terrestrial consciousness and the advent, in due course, of a new Supramental race of Gnostic Beings that shall transcend all barriers natural and human. Incorporation of many technical and scientific terms in *Savitri* undoubtedly means that Science in general and scientific achievements in particular will receive the guidance and protection of this Saviour-Power now being manifested upon earth. This is also abundantly clear from the following words of the Mother: "Perhaps the first thing to transform itself will be the scientific world, because science demands a very great sincerity and a very persevering effort, and these are already the qualifications which open to us the door towards a higher life."

That Science is beckoning us onward and upward is strongly suggested by the recent near-miraculous advances and almost incredible break-throughs in the domain of thermo-nuclear experiment, space-travel, naval and rocket techno-

<sup>1</sup> & <sup>2</sup> Proton and photon served the imager eye. Bk. 3, C. 10, p. 274.

<sup>3</sup> Formlessly formed its strange wave-particles...Bk. 2, C. 5, p. 176 (cf. "Wavicle", A. Eddington)

<sup>4</sup> Cuts into quantum and mass the moving All. Bk. 10, p. 277.

logies and indeed in most other spheres and walks of life. An attempt has already been made to show this to some extent in my last article *New Lamp* published in the *Mother India* of December 5, 1965, and as such needs no further elaboration here.

In the present-day world of super-jets and super-bombs, Telstars and Mariners, Geminis and Voskhods, when breakneck speed and kill-or-die competition have become the order of the day, and when practically everyone is prepared to do all sorts of things—foolish or foul, fishy or fiendish—to avoid frustration, monotony and boredom and when an ever-growing craze for something novel or romantic has become the rule rather than the exception, the term “television” is neither novel nor romantic. It is rather already on the way to becoming near-obsolete day by day but—as it has well been said—there is many a slip, ’twixt the cup and the lip. In a country where we cannot even breathe—so to say—without a host of foreign experts and collaborators surrounding us from all sides, where talking in a very big way but acutally doing and learning very little indeed has become the latest fashion like terrylin or terry-cottene, where a great majority of “manufactured products”, so-called, are either third- or fourth-rate imitations or a mere bottling-up and assembly—in a country which after years and years of planning worth crores upon crores of rupees has still to depend helplessly upon American wheat under P.L. 480 Scheme for the barest survival of her near-starved children like a blind man depending hopelessly upon his stick—T.V. is neither cheap nor commonplace, it is rather rare and costly and as such retains all its glamour and romance to the full and is still looked upon as something of a marvel: Hence an informative discussion regarding the basic constituents and functionings thereof may not perhaps be altogether out of place, otiose and old-fashioned.

Now we all know what the term “television” means; it means distant sight—*Duradarshan*, that is—the capacity to see scenes occurring at places that are normally outside of our visual range, either because they are too distant or because there is an intervening obstruction.

In the *Mahābhārata* it is said that Sanjaya, by the Divine Grace, developed a sort of occult-spiritual vision (*divya-dṛṣṭi*) with which he was able to see clearly and distinctly what was happening on the battlefield of Kurukshetra so as to be able to give a graphic and vivid description thereof to the blind old king Dhritarastra sitting in his palace. In our times we need no such occult-spiritual vision for this purpose; we may simply use our T.V. set (provided, of course, we can afford to have one) to watch any “game” relayed and transmitted from the “field”.

Essentially T.V. involves the art and science of converting light waves to electrical currents, transmitting them through space by means of radio waves<sup>1</sup> and then recon-

<sup>1</sup> Radio waves or Electro-magnetic waves are the form in which radio energy travels. Electric and magnetic fields travel at right angles to each other. Electro-magnetic waves are produced by an electron whose velocity is changing. The electron is the smallest negative electrical particle. Electrons in various arrangements with protons and neutrons (both designable as nucleons)—the positive electrical particles and the electrically neutral ones—form all atoms in existence.

verting the electrical currents to light waves at the receiver. While sound waves are simply vibrations of the air which travel at the rate of 1100 ft. per second and which can easily be converted into varying electrical currents by means of a microphone employing carbon granules,<sup>1</sup> light waves are electro-magnetic waves of extremely high frequency and travel at the rate of nearly 1,86,000 miles per second<sup>2</sup> with which arise all the complications and differences between an ordinary radio receiver and a T.V. set.

Now just how does it work ? In order to know this we shall have to know, first of all, something about the basic functions of the human eye.

The process that we call seeing is simply the conversion of rays of light (reflected by all points of any external object) within the eye into pictures or patterns, which are then transmitted by the nervous system to the brain, where we become conscious of the effect. The rays of light reflected by an object are received by the crystalline lens of the human eye and an inverted image is formed on the retina which possesses several million nerve cells to translate or convert the luminous waves into messages for the brain. The image so formed on the retina presents, on microscopic inspection, a mosaic effect of an enormous number of tiny hexagons having variations in tone, or light intensity, that permit recognition of the object :

Certain deficiencies of the human eye prove actually useful in television and in motion pictures. We cannot recognize an object unless the rays of light reflected by it reach the eye with a certain magnitude of angle between the rays. The greater the distance, the closer is the magnitude of such angles and consequently the more blurred, indistinct and hazy is our vision. The details of the images are lost to a greater and greater extent, thereby permitting reproduction of images that do not have all the details of the original, but which are nevertheless formed of a sufficiently large number of parts for the eye to see them as a perfect continuity. Owing to this inherent discrepancy of the human eye, when an image is formed on the screen of our T.V. receiver our eyes actually deceive us into believing that it is a perfect whole, that there is no loss of detail and that it is not broken up into a large number little parts placed close together.<sup>3</sup>

The second deficiency is the persistence of vision. We shall discuss it in one of the forthcoming issues.

*(To be continued)*

Malay Kumar Sinha

<sup>1</sup> Carbon granules—small particles of carbon used in microphone construction.

<sup>2</sup> Frequency is the number of cycles per second of an alternating or oscillating current. A cycle in alternating currents (A.C) is one complete reversal in direction. It consists of a rise and fall ; a reversal in direction and a return to the original state of value. A current is the rate of flow of electricity measured in amperes. The term is often used to mean simply a flow of electricity.

<sup>3</sup> Based on the old writings of Mr. C. H. Mansfield of Hollywood Radio and Television Institute, Los Angeles, California, U. S. A.

## **SCHEME OF EYE EDUCATION FOR CLASSES TO PREVENT AND CURE EYE DEFECTS WITHOUT GLASSES**

PLACE the Snellen test chart upon the wall of the class-room. Every day after palming, the children should read it silently from their seats. They should blink after each letter. This must be done first with both eyes and then with each eye separately—before starting the first class of the day. Along with the students teachers should also read the chart. Those who have defective vision should read it four or five times a day after palming till the defect is cured. Children and others who will be using glasses may not be benefited.

*What is palming?* Palming is a great relaxation for the mind and eyes. By palming is meant to close and cover the eyes with the cups of the palms, so as to shut off all light. Now a completely dark field will be observed before the eyes. After covering the eyes imagine something familiar and pleasant, like a boat floating in a river, a flower, a sunset, a game or letters of the chart, etc. Palming may be done for five minutes.

*What is Blinking?* To blink is a natural habit of the eye. Blinking is a quick method of resting the eyes. In normal blinking, the upper eyelid comes a little down and is raised again. Blinking should be done frequently all the time that one is awake. Blink while reading each line. Blinking should not be mistaken for winking. In winking the upper lid touches the lower lid with a jerk. Winking is bad for the eyes.

Occasional visit of the doctor to the class will prove very helpful; hence the teacher may invite the doctor once a month or once in two months.

R. S. AGARWAL

### **ANNOUNCEMENT**

We have pleasure in informing our readers that Dr. R. S. Agarwal has agreed to answer questions regarding eyesight through *Mother India*.



**SRI AUROBINDO INTERNATIONAL CENTRE OF EDUCATION  
DEPARTMENT OF INFORMATION AND RESEARCH**

**NEWSLETTER**

No. 9

September 1967

*I. Comment on the World Union Conference—Pondicherry (August 1967)*

THE conference was centred on the theme : "Education for One World", and a number of brilliant speakers enlightened the seminar with their erudition. Whether this seminar was truly a "seed" to bear fruit at some future date depends rather on whether the personalities and thoughts of the speakers were communicated to effect.

Several vice-chancellors and principals of colleges attended this five-day conference and the speakers came from various countries and with diverse backgrounds.

Speeches ranged from quotations from the Greek classics, seventeenth and eighteenth century literature, philosophers of the past to scientists of today, to an imaginative cybernetic world of the future where man's problems would be solved by the computerised electronic brains of tomorrow.

It is almost inevitable that formal speeches delivered in such a climate would be speculative. Nevertheless, one or two speakers did touch down to earth experiences in educational research and there seemed to be a general agreement in the lobbies that new methods of teaching, wider concepts of understanding based on inner values have to be implemented if an education for One World is to become possible. I think the most rewarding aspect of the conference was the possibility that enabled small informal groups of educators to meet on their own for more detailed talks and exchange of their ideas and experiences. It was generally recognised that we have arrived at a position, as far as formal or traditional education is concerned, where specialisation has succeeded in drawing us away from the real job and purpose of educating. The word "educate" has lost its meaning, "to bring forth" what is within the child, and we are content to reduce the student to a receiver of information, mostly for which he has no use or interest.

Copernicus wrote that "mathematics is for mathematicians"—meaning that science is for the specialists. The book in which the phrase occurs is one of highly technical astronomy, devoted to the calculation of planetary positions and directed to astronomers. But it is also the book which suggested that the earth moves round the sun, not the sun round the earth; and this theory also led in the next century to what the Pope called "the greatest scandal throughout Christendom" and started one of the biggest revolutions in the history of thought about the universe and man.

It is surely an integrated picture of facts and forces that has to be presented to the student of today. Fifty years ago the child was taught that Napoleon and

Adam Smith were the only factors worth remembering about the 19th century. The fact that steam was put to use in the service of man finds very little place in the history books of that time. The present-day student needs to be able to compare the impetus of growth and the forces within man and the universe. For example, it took sixteen years to modify the Puffin' Billy (1813) to the Rocket (1829). But it took only three-and-a-half years from the first Sputnik in space (August 1957) to the first man in space (October 1961), a far greater technological problem requiring vastly wider ranges of inter-cooperation between scientists, technicians, politicians, administrators and idealists than ever before envisaged.

While the practice of science has become almost entirely a matter for specialists who take little or no cognisance of its integrating factors, its repercussions not only involve the whole of the community but extend into other fields of study and action. The one interesting element which could greatly contribute to a synthesis is that of communications and communication media.

Experiments have been made in England, at Manchester, Stirling, Lancaster and Sussex to invent new kinds of curricula which will broaden the approach of Scientists. Professor Jevons explained in his BBC talk at the beginning of the year, "Science Greats," what is being tried at Manchester : the aim is to offer a new kind of "skill-mix" with an honours course officially called "liberal studies in science."

These new experiments are making an effort to answer the realisations, rather late in manifesting, that the young have moved into a world where old shibboleths hold no water, where the old authorities are no longer unquestioned and where the old gods are no longer held in awe. But we have somehow to deal with a more urgent problem, and that is to equate a fast-growing awareness of consciousness in the very young—an awareness to deeper and higher truths within themselves—to the quickly changing world around them.

The need for integration as a method of inner discipline for the Whole Man and the need for integration of empirical knowledge—the sciences and the humanities, technology and philosophy—is widely recognised as an urgent need on all levels of education but how this is to be implemented when there is yet little agreement on methods of communication is difficult to see.

We are all sensitive to the very real problem of language media in India. Its implications on political, administrative, technical, educative and cultural requirements are manifold. But surely, it is the welfare and growth of the youth of the nation that should be considered first, if the nation itself is to benefit. This every school child knows—but do the politicians? When TV becomes widespread throughout the country will it be used—as would be most effective—to educate the people in their villages to more enlightened methods of agriculture ; the workman in the urban areas to up-to-date methods of handling tools ; the parent in the home to modern ways of child psychology, and the teacher to the innumerable possibilities open to school, college and university usage ? Would this very important communication medium be administered by the politician, the civil servant or Big Business

Powers ? Would the educators have a voice in the manner in which this educational tool should be put to use ? Or would the first consideration be : how much money, power and authority can we get out of this medium of communication ?

To sum up : we can say that education for One World and education for the Whole Man demands that we seek the integrating factor in each case. The most direct method to that would be to follow the lines laid down in Sri Aurobindo's Integral Yoga. Education for the very young to be founded on a freedom of growth that allows the psychic being, the true soul, to blossom in a climate of beauty and harmony stimulated by the search for and discovery of the truth in things. Where the teacher's chief function is to create interest, guide and encourage. Where there should be appreciation, rather than praise, and where the classroom is student activated rather than teacher dominated. The aim would be to bring out, "educate," all those inner values latent in the child that would help him towards the growth and progress of his consciousness as an individual so that he may contribute those values to the sum total of human endeavour and man's evolutionary aspiration to the Truth of his Existence. If it is the psychic being that will bring about a synthesis of the inner being towards a unity of the Whole Man so will it be the higher reaches of Mind that will come to solve the increasing complex problems of life with which modern man is faced.

Mind as it is today cannot deal with the multiplying problems of an expanding human universe that promises to embrace the stars. Mind, through the psychisation of the being, will need to transcend itself if it is to follow its evolutionary path towards the Ideal of Human Unity.

#### *Thought of the Month*

"Man's impulse to be free, master of Nature in himself and his environment cannot be really fulfilled until his self-consciousness has grown beyond the rational mentality, become aware of the true sovereign and either identified itself with him or entered into constant communion with his supreme will and knowledge."

SRI AUROBINDO, *The Human Cycle*, p. 137.

NORMAN C. DOWSETT